Notes and Customs

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A Memo on the Need for Intervention During this Ontological Crisis of Individualistic Capitalist Motivations

The world population wonders how people will continue to aspire to create great things and embark on great achievements without money. It is rather embarrassing to be a human when people express these narrow-minded thoughts. Why would human ambition and the desire to create vanish without the incentive of money? In a post-capitalist social economy, if done correctly, everyone would have everything they need. Therefore, everyone would be free to create lives for themselves in which they can express their true dreams, desires, and motivations for self-determination. How then can one say that only money brings us advancement? And do you not demonstrate your own desire to see others live in poverty when you want these motivations of greatness to be the few who are in the privileged position to gain access to financial reward?

This all shows that people want others to suffer. I no longer know if an advanced, progressive socio-normative educational reform will ring the desire to harm others out of social understanding and placement. It is possible, and we must consider, that the human species is designed for self-harm, the desire to see others suffer, and the greed of only limited individual achievement, while others have nothing. What we can take away from this is that we must try to break through the barrier of limited human understanding. I do not know which must come first, education reform or abolishing capitalism. I can no longer determine the best course of action to see the most positive results that are mapped out correctly. I am failing as an anti-capitalist.

The ecology of capitalism shows how determined we are to bring to fulfillment both our individual, selfish capitalist desires, and to see those motivations impact the Earth, our environment, and the very land we are the inhabitants of. How far can these psycho-social desires to bring so-called human achievement into fruition be determined by limitations, scarcity, suffering, and needless sacred individualism? The human species, collectively, desires a game of survival so that the few can have what only the one could be.

I no longer know if we deserve such a gifted life that a post-capitalist society would bring. What I can see is that we are not only in an extreme climate crisis, but also an ontological crisis of individualism and humanity that must be confronted if we are to survive in a resemblance of manner that seeks out justice, peace, and the warm desire to see others be their best selves. Is that so hard? Is that asking so much? As children we are taught to respect the boundaries of others. How can we forget these basic life lessons? That we are alive within a social order filled with other people that all deserve respect, space, and time to be their best selves. We must act quickly if we are to ward off this current direction of self-centered-layered downward projection of human progress. We must help others redefine the very idea of progress.

Rights and Responsibilities: Addressing Love and Violence in a Post-Capitalist World

Love is always wise: So I heard a voice, perhaps it was a bird, telling me. At first, this is offensively incorrect. It means rejecting all means of self-protection, all methods of self-preservation. This is not the world we live in. We live in a fraught world of assorted love where real psychological, financial, emotional, and life-threatening hard won minor entries into worn journals seek solace in lost and broken stories told by broken older people, more experienced people. In fact, it is the responsibility of those of us who have learned from experience to teach the younger generation the realities of the illusions of love.

But upon further reflection, yes, indeed, to live as a saint, a holy and right way – as though there is an after-presence that we should all be striving to locate ourselves in a correct and upright position, then yes, we should always choose love. But truly, who can do that? These seems like one of those occasions when we can say no person can really live in such a way, at least not all the time, and certainly not always selflessly. That is, without self-interest getting intermingled in the manner of such an approach to life.

Perhaps it is possible. What a beautiful end to one's life to have lived that way. This being true whether there is an afterlife awaiting with rewards of esteem and euphoria or not. Or not. That is a lot to think about. We are indeed to live as though there is no reward for what we do. To do the right thing, on an elevated level, each to their own capacity, each to their own responsibility, each to their own majestic presence in this life, small or low, overwhelming or hidden; that is love.

Improved, excellent education and magnified cultural sensitivity are not enough to end violence. A start in the right direction, a necessary beginning, but there is something more ontological that must be collectively restored to our inner-selves that is not too dependent on a matter as intangible as grace in order to master what a society, what a peoplehood can become post-violence. I do fear the most difficult pattern to subsume would be an era in which we slowly come to reject violence. That is not the era we live in today. Many conceive of selective persons for whom this is a reality, but, no, we are not even at the beginning of that stage. It is not that I say there is violence therefore no one rejects violence. I am not so stonehearted.

However, violence is so intertwined into every aspect of cultural affairs, within and without social orders as dynamic as those across the Earth, that to say there is any real status given to non-violence would be a disservice to the very idea of anti-violence not to mention the goal of a post-violence society. It is also not that we are to be reborn as one, but that our shapes and stations across this axis or that must be neurologically infused with the core elements in interdependent freedoms. No, we are so sadly removed from such a state that it has been difficult to continue this project and still claim that it is non-fiction, that it could possibly offer hope of a new tomorrow. But it is just that which must come. A

new tomorrow is necessary for growth and what is more, for stability. Without stability the astronomical potentiality of the different surfaces of how to address justice just may leave us behind, far from the very lived justice we seek to find. Having said that, the topic and substance of addressing justice must come first and be an early presence in our talks, or educational institutions for all ages, and our refined ingenuity for caring.

We must still believe that we can care and that we are able to care for each other to such extremes that as a matter more than cultural mores or amended laws, but constraints within reality – that we can leave violence behind us and move on to other things. Such wonderful things. We are living now in an age that was the distant past for Vulcans of *Star Trek*. We are barbarians. We are illogical. We have no control over our emotions. It has been said that though there is one idea of democracy for one country, another country may establish democracy within unique and different distinctions, and this is true. So true is how we will differ from the early era stereotypes of Vulcans; as soulless automatons lacking passion and depth. Still, similarly, we must find our method of embracing Surak. For us Surak will not and should not be a single individual or idea that spreads and uproots the old dominion. Our problem of violence is multilayered and we should have a multilayered response.

Our approach to resolving conflict is still an early study. Non-violence and conflict resolution are still nascent as a widespread concept, at least as we know them today. They are one layer. Racial justice is another layer. Poverty is another layer. Interpersonal turmoil is another and trauma yet still another. They are all violence.

To paraphrase Walter Benjamin, violence in society exist to protect the law. The law exists to protect those in power. It falls within any society's rights *and* responsibilities to protect themselves from a government of institutionalized violence. A change in power structures is not as far-fetched as many would have us to believe, limited by their own imaginations, and distilled by the indoctrination of capitalist credo that government exists to protect the people. It has not. Within my initial direction of the idea of rights and responsibilities, I think, goes one step further. I do not believe most societies would fall in plunder and anarchy if given the chance to rule themselves, to have rights themselves, because inside most individuals there lies a different credo, one of assumed rights *and* responsibilities towards oneself.

As so many self-help specialists have helped a generation to see, when we take care of ourselves, we are in a much better position to take care of others. We all do better when we all do better, as so many have said. Without currency, for example, people would not stop working, but they would work in a field more aligned with their sense of self – self-realization brings wisdom, wisdom brings charismatic openness to lift those around us. As stated in the science fiction series, *The Orville,* after matter synthesis when money became obsolete, people didn't lose that drive to become something great, it just took on another form. *The Orville* gives us "reputation" as one replacement for money as people still want to be the "best at what they do." While I agree with this as a mainstream sentiment, I think it is just that, a sentiment.

Perhaps without currency – within the inner stemming eclipse of rights *and* responsibilities – we would simply learn to take care of one another. I put forward to you, that if we each, all of us, had everything we needed or wanted provided for us, would not the majority of those in most societies want to give

back for that which they receive. This is where social services come into play. Everything from healthcare to recreation, all according to an even balance. Yes, there is a Marxist element here: each according to their own ability. Is that so bad? This balance would be so much easier to manage as society would have already found a balance in providing for those without asking for anything in return for providing to everyone else.

They would give in return for what they had received. Call it pride, as I know some of you will, or self-dignity, it is our internal sense of rights *and* responsibilities that will drive us to create a productive society that does not leave anyone behind – I do not mean that as a helpless, exploitative political motto. It would be real. It would be true.

I have said for some time now that social progress begins with education. Perhaps it begins with other externally acting reforms that persuade an atmosphere and environment that allow unaltered education to exist. From there education can continue to sustain such a society for generations. Perhaps these externally acting reforms will come from the political arena, or, perhaps, from an ontological-spiritual dominating tradition of becoming the other in the sternest, realized sense, that before we can become, we must become the other.

To return to Benjamin, what we can take from the notion that violence exists to protect the law is that violence in society is a choice. Not altogether a choice made willingly by us as individuals, but certainly one we collude in with our ingrained capitalists dream-like denial of our own mortality, as Ernest Becker put it, in our pursuit for wealth and prosperity. What Becker shows us is, again, is that it doesn't have to be this way. Think back on what was previously stated that in with worldbuilding of *The Orville*, reputation replaces currency. This is opposite of the critique of humanity that Becker illustrated in his writings. Striving for, taking pride in, targeting ambition for productive means, aiming for something higher, these can all be positive attributes if given a more humanistic aligned environment in which the groundwork has been settled on the soil of rights *and* responsibilities.

We do not give up our innate nature. We do not give up on curiosity, our wonder, or need to explore ourselves is paramount to what we know of life and living and being social creatures. The tenet of the reality of our own esteemed rights *and* responsibilities takes us to a place where we can see that we can be held to account for the condition of the world and our place in it. We are all graduates of our own experiences. With that in mind, keep alive the notion that we can be trusted to live out or days seeking a more fulfilling role for ourselves than the current options made available to us by the capitalist state-structured ethos of bootstrap technologies, of corporate office parties and wage labor.

Capitalism and Violence-Customs

There is the potential movement today for even the brightest types of democracies to normalize into a hybrid totalitarian, democracy-lite, formational violence. Of course, whether these institutions were ever true democracies to begin with should, must be questioned, but that historical mapping is beyond the scope of this present section, though not out of mind. The younger generation presents potential to revolutionize the very interpretation of a democracy, but we have seen this potential in the younger generation with prior generations and it has not come to pass. It is possible any type of government tied to capitalism necessitates violence and a forced acceptance of inequality. This seems the most likely scenario that will develop in the future. However, of course, that could arguably be changed if different types of people ran for office, were enticed to run for office; a different personality type compelled to run for office would offer a revision of New Deal politics that pundits and commentators may well say is the first step towards a post-capitalist society, if corroborated correctly.

If first, institutional change caresses the collaborative self towards systematic change then the educational model that transfixes the self towards a strong, unrelenting invitation of peoplehood propels the self towards self-regulation and the inviting of spiritual, abstract, and dexterous forms of unrolling the scroll of inviting, shared selfhood.

It is true that the educational model that works towards preparation of the individual becoming the collective is needed regardless of what regulatory reparations are performed within and alongside the elimination of structural violence forms. However, this is an educational model that is firmly and specifically separated from capital interest. The removal of capital reward from firm study is holistically required to replace the burden of support from the individual to the group. Joanne Savage, et al., concluded in their study, “The Role of Poverty and Income in the Differential Etiology of Violence: An Empirical Test,” that there are greater incidences of violence among their sample with those in lower income brackets. Their conclusions, drawn from their data, was,

> The pattern of mean incomes suggests that violent delinquents live in families with lower incomes than nonviolent-only offenders (M = $43,051 compared to $54,374) and nonviolent-only offenders have the highest income in both data sets, even compared to nonoffenders (M = $51,352). The poverty rate among violent offenders was 20.3%, compared to 14.6% among nonviolent-only offenders. The poverty rate among nonoffenders was 15.9%, slightly higher than the nonviolent-only group. (2019, 9)

With the from the ground up approach of a holistic Green New Deal paired with an institution so invigorated with anti-capitalist values that it invites the beginning of a post-capitalist environment, structural change manifests itself in many, divergent forms. The marriage of capital and wealth separates the more valuable self-interest of the self-valued principle of wealth of knowledge. Throughout the entire three-tiered path of least resistance model it is the invitation and value of knowledge that alleviates a great deal of violence-debt and exhilarates the self away from violence-customs.

Mary McCormick illustrates in her article, “Through a Different Lens: The Social Sanctioning of Family Violence,” that,

> During most of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century, child abuse and neglect were articulated as failure to train the child in moral conduct, and failure to provide discipline and structure to the developing child, thus failing to socialize him to assume his role as a productive citizen (Dolgin, 1997; Peled & Kurtz, 1994; Chicago Vice Commission, 1911). It was not until Henry Kempe identified battered child syndrome in 1962 that the outcomes of harsh parenting or corporal punishment were viewed as child maltreatment, a social problem, not a parental option in child-rearing (Peled & Kurtz, 1994). Society’s ambivalence toward violence in the family is apparent in the various definitions and interpretations of battering and abuse including, physical aggression toward a child or intimate partner, corporal punishment, harsh parenting, non-accidental physical injury, assault, and crimes against women (Ateah & Durant, 2005; Rothenberg, 2002). Based on these definitions, violence in the family has been viewed as the result of individual pathology, moral failure, lack of internal control or as a crime (Worden & Carlson, 2005; Erickson, 2000). (2007, 46)

Our inherited roles in perpetuating a culture of violence-customs regulates the sustained chores of non-violence inquiry against a backlash of those who wish to preserve traditional modes of violence. This is not without willful participation or collaborative insistence on a focus of capital-centered, valued violence. McCormick continues,

> The use of force in families in the service of maintaining the social order is normative. While regulating behavior is essentially a function of family structure, when this structure breaks down, it is the role of society through its institutions and structures to regulate the behavior of the individual (Durkheim, 1951; Ross, 1900). Coercion and control, in other words socially sanctioned aggression through financial, legal and religious institutions and structures, becomes culturally consonant. (2007, 53)

Epitome scaling, that is what I call, summaries of abstracts of perfect examples of humanness symbolic of the reducibility of capitalist functionality and normalcy of dispossession are concentrated in terms of solidifying conquest and habitual norms in a divergent society. The populist tendency to navigate from one hyper-concentrated form of epitome scaling to the next exposes a projection from being witness to ontological reduction while the more harshly dispossessed are displaced, dislocated, and dismissed by the triggers of those navigations to the new form of (un)equal expression. Between epitome scaling and those concentrated, navigating tendencies resolves a share-metrics that reflects time out-of-bound. There is only one reality, we simply each share and split different lived experiences of that single reality leading to (un)shared perspectives. Share-metrics is the buildup of external retreat from the resemblance of truth that our participation in this other staged reality demands of us and encourages.

Violence-narratives among and tied into the social classes carry with them a sense of authenticity of the national-bound experience. Our narratives act as texts and manifest as plays to be performed. As Edward Said’s *Orientalism* shows, “texts can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe” (1978, 94). Violence-narratives appear in contemporary societies as waking dreams that in turn become manuals for further illustrations of a point or thesis. They are not limited to those of ill intent, but also become inspiration-stories for activists fighting for racial justice, restoration in Syria,

justice for families who are victims of gun violence, and science fiction that dictates a future communal democracy that stabilizes the worst indulgences of violence-perpetrators. These all fulfill the acts of violence-narratives indirectly or unabatedly. The perpetuation of violence-narratives is not dissimilar to Frantz Fanon's explication of the bourgeoisie from European heritage to an "racketeer mentality" in underdeveloped nations:

> The bourgeoisie, which evolved in Europe, was able to elaborate an ideology while strengthening its own influence. This dynamic, educated, and secular bourgeoisie fully succeeded in its undertaking of capital accumulation and endowed the nation with a minimum of prosperity. In the underdeveloped countries we have seen that there is no genuine bourgeoisie but rather an acquisitive, voracious, and ambitious petty caste, dominated by a small-time racketeer mentality, content with the dividends paid out by the former colonial power. (*The Wretched of the Earth*, 2004, 119)

Fanon's bourgeoisie are maintained by violence-narratives. A consumerism capital reading of Václav Havel's post-totalitarianism, that totalitarian regimes continue to thrive not through unrestricted oppression but through economic displacement of societies into a consumer goods dependency, reifies the opposition of power that is mutually dependent and equally participatory. They sell us the idea of money and we buy into their leadership and quasi-national sense of direction at the cost of human rights and in the contradictory spirit of the myth of self-determination.

The relocation of violence-narratives demonstrates the agility of violence to persist and extend itself even under the duress of quarantine. Here violence only becomes more valuable to those who wish to attain its lure. Are we to believe that the same could occur in the restriction of violence-narratives in human life? Would childhood trauma and the relapse of predisposition be a sought-after commodity to be attained through back alleys and meetings in dark rooms? Are we truly traders in guilt? Merchants of pain? Is there a collaborative orchestration taking place in our reality? Truly a directional approach to satisfy our need to consume violence under the illusion of commerce. Are patriotism and diplomacy, capitalism and the economy, health care and human rights, all exterior portrayals of demonstrative "intentions" to resolve violence built in natural defenses to preserve the continued existence of violence-narratives and the sources of predisposition?

Perhaps the Neo-Freudian, Ernest Becker, would imply that yes, we are so driven by the hero's quest to imitate immortality that humanity, at least in contemporary capitalist societies, has been driven to devise a system where we can feel good about ourselves for attempting to deride violence on the surface while simultaneously restricting our ability to move beyond violence-narratives and preserving the sources of conflict that restitute these narratives. Perhaps white picket fence and 2.5 children quests of norms are a form of nuclear religiosity that seeks to cement violence-narratives as being unapproachable and unrelatable in our quasi-civilized society. If we state we are living in peace with world through admirable, peaceable means – a family, a house, a stable career – then we create the illusion that the slow violence of persistence of norms is not relevant or that peace can be created in isolation against the grain of globally preserved integrated violence.

Law enforcement, the state of institutional public education, political doctrine, capitalist interdependency, all demonstrate the fabric of bare minimum of fostering social growth. They are as though we are projecting into social order what we know are necessities, but we do so with one blind

eye and barely visible sight in the other eye, impaired by our slow – through historically evolving – ideas of living with other and living while self-shaping. This precludes a more natural and nuanced selfhood, sainthood, otherhood, and base understanding of the necessary reciprocal involvement of living towards the great labors of freedoms that determine our evolution towards sustainability and human rights of difference and embrace of othered personal architecture. Conflict resolution begins with the other. We are taught, with a contemporary allegiance, that it begins with ourselves. Through the process of obtaining forgiveness from others we can begin to mend and reshape the balance of the self and how we fit into the stars and cooperative society.

In “Feminist Theory and Economic Geography,” (1994) a review by Andrew Leyshon and the prolific scholar, Liz Bondi, acquaints the reader with the 1994 IBG Conference, put together by the Women and Geography Study Group as well as the Economic Geography Study Group. The session was titled, “Feminist Theory and Economic Restructuring.” Many of the speakers worked to argue that the economic exploitation of women and women’s labor in new capitalist functions highlights that a holistic insightful needs to give a strictly economic outlook a second review. Women’s work was changing, as it continues to change, and masculinarity, with its advantages of being able to forfeit domestic duties to his partner, warrants the need to review the economics of humanistic geography through a feminist lens. Increasing privatization paired with the largest increase of women’s work then coming out of the public sector created an economic climate of greater insecurity (Leyshon and Bondi, 1994).

Consider the pentameter and meter; the non-metrical intonation that has sharpened and swayed the motion of voices through ages is a poetical discourse. The matter of substance is intertwined in the detonation of reason; abstract patterns made logical through practical affairs. Romance is common, meter more than a dalliance of human affairs, but, instead, a science of discourse. So, too, does the chained reason for our meted-out mercies seem opaque and non-controversial. As those acquainted with discourse theory know, the phenomenology of discourse is the study of dominance. John Guillory states simply in *Cultural Capital* that “[t]he movement to open the canon to non-canonical authors submits the syllabus to a kind of demographic oversight” (1994, 7). The canon of the discourse of mercy also derides the white-washed syllabus as an “oversight” to say the least. Guillory later turns his reader to scholar and critic, Erich Auerbach’s, functional definition of “literary language,” – what he condensed under the triumvirate diatribe of “selectivity, homogeneity, and conservatism,” or what Auerbach referred to as Hochsprache (1994, 71). With a selective, homogeneous, and conservative canon, Hochsprache is little more than maintenance of quasi-scholarship or from a sociopolitical discourse or dominance, it is he continuation of dedicated voices to a standard of reason that does not serve in the interest of all, but the few. It is well-reasoned neglect. So, too, is the perpetuation of violence-narratives that incubate and tolerate violence-societies within the capitalist state.

A Vision for a Culture of Emancipatory Human Rights

Ken Booth's essay, "Three Tyrannies," from the text, *Human Rights in Global Politics* (eds. Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler), posits a highly instructive foundation stone, a guide map, for societal change that considers our differences, argumentative positions, and then reifies human worth through a simple matter of direct application, though in reality, confrontation to fascist, capitalist, consumer, and monetary edicts. What I can simply summarize as a platform of ***emancipatory human rights***, Booth (an international relations theorist) reviews other perspectives of global political and cultural insistences that mandate we deter from protecting each other. The reality is that only through protecting each other will we protect ourselves. Towards the beginning of his essay, Booth states,

> "The purpose […] is to discuss the language of human rights, and how in particular three tyrannies in the way we conceive, approach, and talk about human rights. The discourse of human rights is potentially crucial to human history because it is part of the language of human species' self-creating emancipation from natural to societal threats." (31, 1999)

Truly, this dialogue that we hammer between ourselves, among private groups and diplomatic channels is (re)creating the hemisphere of how we conduct our business as human beings. Even that seemingly far distant space where politicians, ambassadors, NPOs, NGOs, or official channels of organized space dictate their presumed enforcement of the rights of others, there is a commonality that is not out of the sphere of common, average bystanders. We, the public at large, (re)create violence-customs as well as doctrines of human rights with or without the input of the high-minded, privileged circles. That is not to say, most importantly, that there is not a middle ground – a crossing point – where the two establishment clauses meet and decipher the future of human society, space, and geographical difference. From dock workers to bankers, we find our commonality like a god finds a blade of grass.

This all, of course, is counter to casual expectations. As Booth writes, "the way some people talk about human rights: they look around, and observe that humans do this and humans do that – usually focusing on the nastier side of human behaviour – which then quickly leads them to the conclusion that humans have always done this and have always done that – and always will" (33, 1999). However, contrary to our ingrained cartography of emphasis on negating matter in with or without, given a fair chance, under an equal society with parity in race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, communal histories, and expectations to contribute, there is a lodestar that will bring a fruitful lasting place where we can harmonize a dialogue of sober-minded reiteration of our native instincts.

Consider a world post-capitalism. It is impossible for many to conceive a way society will continue to function. The assumptions are that no one will want to do anything. Futurists write that technology will free humanity from exploitative labors, freeing us to pursue our own interests. However, before the technology is developed, there must first come a collective revolution of hearts and minds. As Commander Kelly Grayson said in *The Orville's* season 3 episode, "Future Unknown," you cannot

have the technology for independence for a utopian society without first having the collective heart for a utopian society. Otherwise, the technology will just be bought and sold among the privileged class, and have-nots will be further exploited. We are still a long way from that technology and further still from having the will of heart to care about each other's well-being. I do not know how or what will inspire such devotion to altruism. I do not know how we will create a society that cares about the needs of all its people. However, it *must* occur if society is to grow.

Booth briefly cites Carrithers in that it should be "change, not permanence, at the center of our vision" (34, 1999). History is nothing if not the continuous record keeping of adroit change. Being animals that here and now take up position as the alpha species on this planet, even if temporary within the scale of immense long-shadowed history of this planet, future and past, we should dedicate ourselves to a common human experience with *emancipatory human rights* at the center. We are, in fact, drawn to do so, which can be seen in the very insistence, though the differences may be, in how independent freedoms should operate. In making the same argument from within different arguments we reveal we are instinctively resolved to find an answer in everyone's best interest. The Education Model I discuss in my essay, "Violence is Not Inevitable: From Ending Violence to the Education Model and Space and Place," outlines that a concrete culture of firm, established, rich and cultivated growth of education from grade school up to university must be established as a core element of ridding society of violence-impulses as well as imposing fractions of difference. Booth illustrates our common insistence for a groundwork of human rights, stating,

> The argument is not that a strong universal rights culture will happen, only that there are no grounds – historically or anthropologically – for saying that it will not. Sociality theory demonstrates the human potentiality for complex social relations, and it remains to be seen what this might mean, worldwide, under conditions of globalisation and the radically different material conditions of the decades ahead." (35, 1999)

Emancipatory human rights is not merely doctrinal, but innately human, holistic, and a peace-building constructive denomination towards conflict resolution in addition towards the closest grasp towards utopia that we might consider achievable. Booth reiterates,

> in a formal sense, emancipation is concerned with freedom from restraint: in Latin *emancipare* meant 'to release from slavery or tutelage'. Expressed more fully, it might be defined as the freeing of people as individuals and groups from those physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do; this means identifying and struggling against oppressive structures or power, and creating new structures and power relationships that promise to enhance human potentialities. (40, 1999)

As we have already seen, locally and globally, *emancipatory human rights* are a pivot towards human liberty in its fullest extent. While in "the twentieth century, emancipation became not only a struggle *against* oppression but also, more coherently, struggle *for* new visions of society" (Booth 40, 1999), those visions taught new generations not only about the past, but also about the future and what it means to live in a collective, mutually growing societal realm that is bound to bring the changes of history but should not be without a center that is a maxim of promise and equity. Equity today is the promise of the very idea of the future itself. That should not be forgotten in the winds and currents of

daily responsibility, which, more often than not, is imposed responsibility that serves little purpose towards our combined freedoms.

Yes, there is and will be a continued fear of sheep-hood as if universal virtues are a scarecrow warning the birds away from good ideas. “Universalism set standards,” Booth continues, “but that need not be the same as sameness or cultural homogeneity” (55, 1999). At the time of writing this towards the end of 2022 we have seen diversity strive and succeed in some areas while it continues to greatly struggle in others. To make matters worse, segments of the population are essentially anti-diversity. Diversity has become divisive, though for a short time was slowly growing across society with fact-based evidence of the positive reification of all forms of diversity. Booth reminds us that “universal standards may indeed sustain diversity rather than the opposite” (55, 1999). It is absurd to think that those who are struggling to defeat diversity across the many fractions of society do not themselves believe in their own version of universalism, as Booth so adroitly puts, “clearly, there are no non-universalist. Even the total rejection of universal human rights is a universalist position on human rights” (56, 1999). *Emancipatory human rights* denote the experience of a society that has learned growth comes from combined strength, not of pure will, but of greater calmness and the rejection of paranoia and mistrust. Freedom from fear facilitates freedom from bondage.

Emancipatory human rights, truly and fully realized, will free us from the burdens of society. Technology will not save us. Technology cannot liberate under the confines of capitalist culture, consumer dominance, and the combined tolerance for everyday oppression and casual acceptance of fascist doctrine. As Booth tells us, “it is only by recognizing our human sameness in an *other* regarding universal solidarity that we will actually protect human diversity and reduce human wrongs” (56, 1999). Inequality is learned. We are taught from birth the normalcy of consumer capitalism and fascist acceptance of division and imposing labors. It will not be until we are born into a society that has long embraced the Educational Model, as a start, and weaved collective mutual interests into our own paths of continual human discovery that we will free ourselves from the discourses of discrimination and acceptance of oppression near and far. Through that form of liberty, utopia can be realized. At least, it can be realized through the closest form that human limitations can accelerate and societal customs can be radicalized through a diminishing of indifference.

The Need to Decolonize, Defragment, and Liberate Human Rights Practices Towards Emancipatory Culture

In Sofia Monsalve Suárez’s article, “Re-grounding Human Rights as Cornerstone of Emancipatory Democratic Governance,” (*Society for International Development 2021*) Suárez outlines primary issues with human rights established practices, culture, and loopholes that negate responsibility as well as hinder progress for a culture of emancipatory human rights culture within structural systems designed to implement the very laws and practices that would secure a fairer assessment, evaluation, and implementation of a culture of human liberation. At the center of these setbacks is capitalist endeavors, stating, “human rights should be at the forefront of the struggle to re-shape financial capital and its destructive economic model” (13). What we can assess from the very nature of capitalist retreat from human dignity is an elaborate wasting, seismic indifference, as long as financial motivations are centered towards human rights building and human rights progress,

> New and visionary projects for emancipation of humanity and all living things, for achieving ecological, gender and social justice are urgently needed. This includes envisioning democratic and internationalist ways of exercising peoples' sovereignty beyond local and national borders. (Suárez 13)

The violence of borders's principles has been with humanity since the beginning of written history and is entirely economic in its sentiment, to which we can calculate with absolute certainty. To say, like so many others have said, that the violence of economics is inevitable makes one a proponent of violence. Violence is learned, it is not humanity's natural state just as capitalism is not humanity's natural state. *Emancipatory human rights* reaffirm our collective responsibilities as well as our individual rights to security. The responsibility of an un-demarcated justice towards nature, the planet, life on Earth, in addition to ourselves, would habituate capitalist interests towards a more reasonable season of first regret, then action, and finally resolution in which we would see viable action that would temper the elements of failure and backsliding geopolitical insight.

Decolonization is a poignant marker of what is central towards gaining access to *emancipatory human rights* education, achievement, and instilled realization with a dimensional grasp for collective societies. As Suárez states,

> International human rights law is rather limited insofar as it has been shaped predominantly by Western powers. Therefore, it should be regarded as work in progress. A simple test should illustrate the long-standing flaws of human rights law: Does the word 'nature' appear in human rights treaties? Did they recognize the inextricable connection between human beings, their communities and nature and protect this relationship as a matter of fundamental right? The answer is no (Seufert 2020). (14)

Humanity *as* nature is what is primary among the disregard of market forces and enterprise solutions and contributions to climate initiatives. Species across the globe, our very civilizations's means of existing within Earth's climate is rerouted as a force of potential entropy of stakeholders's success in a so-called gradual move towards green energy, with no indication of lower consumption. Suárez writes,

> [M]odern (western) thinking and actions, including law and policymaking, treat humans and the rest of nature as two separate, distinct and independent spheres. This separation is central to the deep ecological crises that the world is facing, and which are manifest most strongly in human-made global warming as well as in the dramatic loss of many living species. Both climate change and the current mass extinction will deeply affect human societies because we cannot escape from these massive disturbances. (14)

Dynamic fears of global societal collapse that are so often convoluted with the rhythms of conspiracy are rooted very much like myth was to ancient cultures (though perhaps it still is in many forms). There are elements of truth in every force-fed fear of a reprisal from nature. So common is humanity's self-harm that most do not see we are the only ones inflicting that damage and, naturally, it should be our aligned revolution to stop it.

> The looming collapse of the earth system as well as the rapid degradation of local ecosystems is closely linked to the sharp increase of inequalities and the concentration of resources in the hands of a few powerful actors, the destruction of the social fabric from the

> community to the national level and resulting migration, as well as wars and famine. The consequence is increasing violence against communities and people, which is further exacerbated by the rise of authoritarianism in all parts of the world. (Suárez 14)

It should be a given that the innate essence of a declaration for a need for a culture of *emancipatory human rights* indicates that we do this to ourselves. Such is the "close link between the way societies (mis)treat and exploit humans on the one hand and nature on the other" (Suárez 14). I have stated elsewhere that the absence of capitalism would not bring about the end of social order as we know it, as so many have completely internalized into their higher functions and belief system, despite such ideology working towards their own detriment that all matter under the sun is limited to them through access to currency.

> If food is a human right and food systems are commons or public goods, individual/corporate property rights to land, water, forests, fisheries or seeds cannot be the predominant model which overrides all other forms of social relationship with these natural goods, particularly collective and community-based ones. (Suárez 16)

As Suárez so concisely states, people are simply not given a choice. International practices demand it. Local populations are determined to believe that no one would work in a system that is established without currency. It doesn't take much imagination – rationality – to see that given a communal system in which all peoples had their needs taken care of, the greatest majority would want to give back and therefore would work towards the good of their localized, or larger, community to ensure safety, stability, and collective preservation.

The primary difference is under such a liberated state individuals would be free to explore their own talents and give back to their community in ways in which they are well-suited, well-adjusted, and what would make them the most content. Suárez aptly writes,

> Capitalism is the main economic system today, and most people have no alternative but to rely on capitalist markets to access basic resources. At the same time, many deep criticisms have been levelled against capitalism, the concentration of wealth and power that it seems to entail, the exploitation of nature and workers and the subordination of women on which it depends. (15)

One can only imagine the inventiveness that would be born with the liberation from capitalist machinations. No more university copyrights or financial limitations. No more citizen defragmentation that resists pursuing ideas that are in the collection good, the collective conscience that would live with the steady girth of emancipatory human rights. Gender and racial parity, classism vanquished, remote outposts of humanity brought together through technological streams of intelligence. Such would be the approximation of the closest form of utopia that humanity could empower – and only thrive to continue to perfect. However, under current structural implementations we are bound by limitations,

> Since the 1970′s, civil society organizations have been calling for the adoption of binding international regulations for transnational corporations (TNCs). No specific binding international law currently exists to prevent harm by the activities of TNCs and the enterprises connected within their supply or global productive chains. Furthermore, there is

> an additional gap in international law with regards to the legal accountability of such entities. Existing voluntary regulations are vague and in some cases ambiguous. (Suárez 15)

The extreme nature of self-interested corporate guidance of our communities and our well-being is something that we have historically sacrificed against our best interest again and again. Nationalism, authoritarianism, post-totalitarianism, all strive for a consumer capitalist edict and thrive within our mutual approval to abide by such laws. As Suárez states in her thorough article,

> Nationalist governments conveniently instrumentalize the colonial and imperial history of international law in order to disregard human rights. Indeed, geopolitics rather than legal or ethical considerations, often determine where human rights criticisms and sanctions emerge and against whom they are directed. (Suárez 16)

As Walter Benjamin teaches us in, *Toward the Critique of Violence*, the law exists to protect those in peremptory power through violent means. What is more evident than the violence of geopolitical oppression, global poverty, the recession of our instinctively born values, and the fear of laws designed to prevent us from a structural change in the very nature of governance? Violence and climate are commingled. As is our distress under those that benefit from capitalism. Emancipatory human rights can only be realized through a discourse that is all encompassing, inclusive, and targeted towards the removal of the barriers of irenic human progress.

Notes on Space and Place, Feminist Geography, and Related Texts

I.

In Hortense J. Spillers essay, “Notes on an Alternative Model – Neither/Nor,” from *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture*, she surveys William Faulkner in a study of negation of the Other and gender. Spillers states, “[t]he exterior other in positive identity is, for Faulkner, a female, and in the Faulknerian situation of the female, we gain good insight into the process of gender-making as a special outcome of modes of dominance” (2003, 305). At the heart of Spillers’s context, as with so many other literary critics, is concern with the negation of history, of reality, of gender and race. Ralph Ellison also noted Faulkner’s problematic dualism with African American identity, which combined with the specter of female subjugation, does not outright endorse Faulkner despite notedly being highly influenced by his craft. Ellison offers in “Twentieth-Century Fiction and the Mask of Humanity” from *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison* that “Faulkner [is] and example of a writer who has confronted Negroes with such mixed motives that he presented them in terms of both the ‘good n*****’ and the ‘bad n*****’ stereotypes, and who yet has explored perhaps more successfully than anyone else, either white or black, certain forms of Negro humanity” (1964 1995, 86). Of course, Ellison was a doctrinal universalist and would not utterly push aside what positive embellishment Faulkner could endorse of African American culture and individualism. While feminist criticism would not completely abandon such modes of acknowledgement, there are more axis points from which to critique than style or sociological outcomes of the times, which was disputed in its sense of productivity by James Baldwin.

Case logic is not without its delegation into symbiotic parts. Spillers expands on Faulkner’s two-fold psychoanalytical play of gender and even as an admirer Ellison notes Faulkner’s situational stance on good or bad fitting form. With voluble diction such analysis arises in which the creator is equally at the mercy of the characterizations. Spillers notes Tzvetan Todorov in her ontological-behavioral case study, which I find value in quoting at length:

> In his *Conquest of America*, Tzvetan Todorov distinguishes three dimensions of the problematics of alterity: (1) the axiological level – “the other is good or bad, I love or do not love him, or ….he is my equal or my inferior (for these is usually no question that I am good that I esteem myself”); (2) the praxeological level – the placing of distance or proximity between oneself and an imagined other – “I embrace the other’s values, I identify myself with him; or else I identify the other with myself, I impose my own image upon him; between submission to the other and the other’s submission, there is also a third term, which is neutrality, or indifference”; (3) the epistemic level – “I know or am ignorant of the other’s identity….of course, there is no absolute here, but an endless gradation between the lower or higher states of knowledge.” (2003, 305)

As stated above, Ellison clearly notes the axiological level while Spillers contrasts the latter half of the praxeological level from the context of feminist scholarship. Of course, both are concerned with the epistemic level. Elsewhere in *Conquest of America*, Todorov comments on the praxeological imposition of religion that "to impose one's will on others implies that one does not concede to that other the same humanity one grants to oneself" (1982, 179). A constructive post-colonialist assessment does not disdain the ontological or the situational. Todorov continues, "a thing is not imposed when one can choose another thing instead, and knows one can so choose. The relation of knowledge to power, as we were able to observe on the occasion of the conquest, is not contingent but constitutive" (1982, 180). The formation of power steals representation. It locks and withholds varied forms of the multitudes of play and expression from all who do not identify with the, ultimately inert, placement of that perceived self. Power is stationary. It withholds those in its proximity from unifying principles of the plasticity of form.

At the risk of contradicting myself on the node of self-importance, to quote myself, "if we were to have a good governance model that emphasized the importance of self-value over inflated self-importance, individual actors would be less in the way of things and this alone would do wonders for communal perceptions of what it means to live together, in this shared space, localized and global" (2020). As Walter Benjamin noted, power exists to impose its own territorial existence. It does so at the expense of cross-cultural expression or matters of shared bonds and shared collectivity of authorization of form. It is worth pointing out that Tzvetan Todorov's writings have been utilized by other scholars in explicating Octavia Butler's Kindred (Sarah Eden Schiff) and Toni Morrison's Beloved (Steven V. Daniels). Toni Morrison cites Tzvetan Todorov herself in her seminal essay "Unspeakable Things Unspoken: Afro-American Presence in American Literature." So, too, have critical authors Roland Barthes, Paul de Man, and Frederic Jameson expounded from Todorov.

Feminist scholar, Susan S. Lanser, in "Feminist Literary Criticism: How Feminist? How Literary? How Critical?" cites Todorov at length from his essay in Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s edited 1985 collection, "*Race," Writing, and Difference*, (a collection from which I cite Sandra L. Gilman in my post, "Representation and Echoes of Exuberant Liberation in the Word 'Juba'") further commenting from Todorov and then postulating,

> Todorov's mention of writers is a powerful reminder of the particular irony that a discipline devoted to the analysis of writing has been reluctant to examine its own discursive practices. It is worth asking ourselves why some of the most radical feminist theory is being produced in a language inaccessible to some of the most radical feminist activists. The turn toward a wider audience seems to me crucial for a critical literary feminism that could take part in a world-wide intellectual movement for social change. (Lanser 1991, 17)

Power dynamics are not without interpretation, but that must yield down to building up an educational model where the stance is not oblique. I am not disagreement with Lanser when I wrote,

> First must come the elimination of structural violence, then what must follow is the letting go of violence of the self. The educational model would prepare and sustain a path towards this deliverance, but not complete the work. A new pattern of selfhood must be explored expeditiously. An adroit sovereignty of self awaits those to release their importance over the Other in all matters of displaced rhythms of selfhood and false alliances of ego. To become

> another is to become oneself. It resolves interpersonal violence as well as spiritual malfeasance and the relenting whispers of arcane retributive glances towards denial of form. (2020)

It is true to form that an educational model pre-revolution, reintegration, and post-violence would need to summarize critical language in accessible and benevolent forms. To say I am in disagreement with Tzvetan Todorov with his momentary comment on a utopianism of violence would be excessive, but I do think he makes too minimalistic a point.

> Perhaps there is a simplistic utopianism in thus reducing matters to the use of violence, especially since violence, as we know, can take forms that are not really subtler but less obvious: can we say of an ideology or a technology that it is merely proposed when it is carried by every means of communication in existence? No, of course not. (*The Conquest of America*, 1982, 180).

If colonial power and post-WWI power structures are to be compared, to call the modern forging of oppression as utopian to those in authority would be eye-opening, though I do not think that is the horizontal witness to the motivation or indoctrination of these entities. In *A Passion for Democracy,* Todorov maintains his distance from commentary on violence, except to say "Freedom of the press is also complete, except for that which harms the integrity of the person (slander, incitement to violence) or of the community (appealing to the population or to a foreign enemy to overthrow the ruling power)" (1999, 43). Certainly, by these standards, in the contemporary West we have indeed given the press the extended freedom, without liability, to incite violence. The localized formula where this crest is laid out through commentary and conviction is in the home. This returns to Spillers explication of "the Faulknerian situation of the female" and "gender-making as a special outcome of modes of dominance" (2003, 305). Public language (the press) and private language (the home) mimic each other in straights and dominance; in routine and simplistic way-bent edification. From this it is clear that the pre-revolution of a post-violence society requires an educational model according to Lanser's plea that takes a "turn toward a wider audience" in its erudition of form and emulating the need for critique of invested sociological stations.

II.

> The need to establish a new language and new criteria for identifying and communicating the most urgent issues of our time is becoming increasingly apparent. Presently, the most common and most effective mode for framing these issues is in terms of globalism, globalization, and global studies. However, framing issues in these terms is problematic inasmuch as the emphasis is being placed on openness, opportunities, and our ability to construct the future in terms of our goals, values and hopes. Yet, it is becoming undeniable that the future will be characterised less by openness and opportunities but by limitations resulting from the fact that the Earth is a closed and finite system, e.g. in light of the continuous expansion of the world's population, the depletion of natural resources, accumulating waste, and impending energy problems, to name just the most obvious cases.

– Henry Dahms. "Rethoeorizing Global Space." *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives,* eds. Barney Warf and Santa Arias (2009, 98).

> During the 1930s, broadcasters became increasingly aware of their domestic audience. As David Cardiff has noted, they realized they needed to be 'conversational' rather than 'declamatory' and 'intimate rather than intimidating.' In consequence, they attempted to emulate the language of domestic space. Indeed, as Kate Lacey has shown, 'as radio matured, it become more familiar in address…the prevailing atmosphere of a public meeting was gradually replaced by the consciously studied informality befitting the familiar setting'

– Maggie Andrews. "Homes Both Side of the Microphone" the wireless and domestic sphere in inter-war Britain." *Space, Place, and Gendered Identities: Feminist History and the Spatial Turn*. eds. Katheryne Beede and Anglea Davis (2015, 85)

If, reading from the interpretive gaze of Walter Benjamin and Luce Irigaray, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs is an early foray into woman's early, structured cognitive foray into space and place in a manner that suits the metaphoric realization of this project. However, that is not without many caveats of early entry into this subject matter. Certainly, Zora Neale Hurston's literary anthropological sensitivities are accumulated into the fold. Space and Place is functionally a wide, vast, and realized permutation of lived reality that can be altered to transfix the subset of masculine architecture that denotes, deconstructs, and demonstrates resisting folds in the space time of lived reality that must be countered to utilize the very inclination of space and place into a palace of reformed society through a feminist lens.

Both organized and scholarly feminism has matured over the years, leading to a consequence of intimate inclusivity that comes closer to perfecting the end-goal of protecting those very women the ideas sought to lift up. Additionally, the idea of transformation has developed in tide and step with this accumulation distribution in the stock of dignity and transgressive people-hood towards the end of resisting the violence of law and becoming a restorative emblem for the seeds of registered feminine counterweights to masculine architectures.

In Ruth Salvaggio's article, "Theory and Space, Space and Women," (1988) she offers descriptive direction to the tone and maneuverability of her directive thesis in the gaze of literary theory, stating,

> [M]y approach is historical, because I navigate through a time period that eventually leads to what Showalter calls "Women's Time," that is, roughly the last fifteen years of feminist criticism. But I will also be navigating my way through spaces that cannot be measured in historical terms, what Showalter has in mind when she describes the largely French feminist exploration of "Women's Space" as "the space of the Other, the gaps, silences, and absences of discourse and representation, to which the feminine has traditionally been relegated" […]. It is through this Other space, I believe, that women are breaking with both traditional and postmodern concepts of space. (262)

In a thorough survey of the review of feminism and space and place, despite strides to the contrary, the firm reality is that there is an aspect that "cannot be measured in historical terms." The traces of adamant neglect of women and women's best interest, well-being, and security in the lived reality of Western and global affairs demonstrates how dire these directive studies must be placed into an approach of being manifest towards a lived reality. Since the founding of the *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom* (WILPF) where, in that time, it was firmly declared that a world with

women in leadership leads to a world at peace, there has been set back after disastrous set back. What space and place, human geography (and feminist geography), post-modernist philosophy, and feminist studies can offer is an interdisciplinary magnifying lens into the holistic treatment of social degradation that continues to assert goals against our own self-interests. To expose those oversights and, hopefully, show what the lived reality of place for feminist space will look like in heuristic terms is a laudable and essential goal.

If validation is the contemporary ethos of feminist teaching then reform and re-testification are allies in the (re)domesticated workspace of elucidation and reification towards the goal of multi-pluralistic landings of peace and restoration of a transfixed public space. To cite myself, if I may be so extreme, "Socio-ontological denominationalism, which are groups within groups, functionary projections of the mind's executive functioning bringing order to the external world are soliloquies of fostered detention of identity. Between the state, the external public sphere of coercion, this lament carries into the private sphere latent threat centers," bringing into the fold all manners of elected and well-placed resistance to progressive change, or, as some would phrase it, the normalcy of women's place in a collective society. Normalcy is what is being rejected, not progressive entry, but the hope of equality. It is capitalism that is a dormant place, bringing any adequate study of space and place into conflict with the sought goal of collective best-interest. A feminist rendering of these measurements of time, collectivity, and social welfare also adjudicate a spendthrift moralism that wakes in the honor of even the slightest suggestion that we be stamped with the same sisterhood, the same brotherhood, or non-binary disposition that starts a conversation, rather than be forced into inclusion.

III.

Sandrina de Finney writes in her essay, "Under the Shadow of Empire: Indigeneous Girls' Presencing as Decolonizing Force," (Mitchell and Rentschler, eds. *Girlhood and the Politics of Place*) that "[a]s a disruptive practice, I look for counternormative conceptual frameworks that offer openings to rethink trauma in our work with Indigenous girls. One such framework is Leanne Simpson's notion that acts of presence are integral to Indigenous resurgence. Simpson emphasizes that decolonization involves understanding and generating meaning 'through engagement, presence, and process.' She asserts that 'Indigenous societies were societies of presence. Our processes – be they political, spiritual, education or healing – required a higher degree of presence than modern colonial existence'" (2016, 21-22). Through community and the giving presence of the community's wide stance on demarcating modes of obstruction come "engagement and visibility" (2016, 22). Through community comes resurgence and through that, "girls' everyday act of presence" (2016, 22). Presence is an act that counters normative weights that seek to subdue or act as tranquilizers of peaceful negotiation to one's lifeforce.

There are those who feel that "presencing" requires more formal redress, such as theology that counters exploitation and dominant histories. Robert Warrior, in his article, "Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians," commented on the work of some activist Christians to aid Indigenous communities in developing a religio-magnified praxis, but notes, "Liberals and conservatives alike have too often surveyed the conditions of Native Americans and decided to come to the rescue, always using their methods, their ideas, and their programs. The idea that Indians might know best how to address their own problems seemingly lost on these well-meaning folks" (1989, 2). That an introductory narrative might still need

to be established gives insight in the continuous othering by even those that promote seeking an assisting role. The space they provide is not merely inclusion, but an insertive, including us, too.

Alicia Arrizon, in her article, “Mythical Performativity: Relocating Aztlan in Chicana Feminist Cultural Productions,” (2000) associates ideas and space with performative standing, stating,

> The term “Aztlán” redefines space. Its discursive configurations, ranging from ancient mythology to land annexation, are engaged repeatedly in Chicano cultural studies and Chicana feminist practices. From the “manifesto” of the nationalist Chicano movement to the radical feminist perspectives in Cherríe Moraga’s queer configurations of space and bodies, the genealogy of Aztlán affects cultural identity, shaping the ongoing modifications —and sometimes, commodifications—of the collectivity. According to myth, Aztlán is the ancestral homeland in the north that the Aztecs left in 1168 when they journeyed southward to found the promised land, Tenochtitlán (Mexico City), in 1325. (2000, 23)

Whether the chemistry of progressive whites to aid with their self-identified superior resources or the magnitude of El Plan de Aztlán at the first National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference in Denver in 1969, “presencing” requires far fewer resources or organized, instructive methods. There is a statement adopted by the disabled community, “my existence is resistance.” The space of the body is the space of mind that permits and instructs deciphered coalesced insights that weakens kingdoms, i.e., colonial empires. That being said. It is not without organization in any capacity that instructs the next generation to displace learned reasoning of conceding compromises. The insistence from Robert Warrior that the Exodus model is worth being emulated, constructive insights are only insights. Thoughts that are intended to strengthen critical thinking, even ill-formed white-centered permutations, do just that (as it is often discovered), inspire a cacophony of ideas that are naturally selected, sorted, and reasoned out. Often in such a way that some elders will hear the sound reason of child’s request and relay an often repeated colloquialism, “out of the mouth of babes.” “Presencing” is the identification of a social unit’s natural way of healing as well as its instinctive identification of that which seems to impose a pre-manufactured order.

Such imposed order comes from location. Steve Pile, in his work, *The Body and the City: Psychoanalysis, Space, and Subjectivity,* writes that “there are no accepted psychoanalytic concepts which can be easily transposed into, superimposed onto, or mapped alongside geography – regardless of the kind of geography […] It is easy to claim that psychoanalysis has been systematically misrepresented, but I would prefer to suggest that particular aspects of psychoanalysis have been selected and presented as if they were symptomatic of the whole approach” (1996, 61). Pile is suggesting, in his work, that psychoanalytical frameworks have been present in treatments of space and place from the onset, and no doubt this returns us to an ever more accessible location of “Leanne Simpson’s notion that acts of presence are integral to Indigenous resurgence” (to return to Sandrina de Finney cited above). Recording, writing, stenciling children’s insights into the width of colonial influence on their everyday lives is not really without an aspect of a practice of the very psychoanalysis of space that Pile is referring to.

At the time of the book’s publication, 1996, Pile stated that psychoanalysis was a “marginal” resource for geographers (61). With strides in interdisciplinarity, that has certainly become less so and though arguably Neo-Freudian, Pile is not without a similitude of the structuralism of Jung that so many post-

modernist found influencing win with. At the very least, Pile's constructs points to another field, that of developmental psychology, as being an even more obvious candidate for a marriage with humanist, feminist geography. The geography of de Finney, citing quotes from children as a merit of space and place is not without the implications of an assumed background in developmental psychology, though that does not make the practice whole. To immerse ourselves not only in "what is benefited by" but also "what benefits" serves to take the most obvious indicators of space and place and developmental psychology towards a progressive dire praxis where the concept of the universal can at the least have some neighboring constituents towards what needs have to be met for sustained progress of societal and inclusive networks of ontological abode.

IV.

I believe the only English translation of French feminist, Claudine Hermann's short essay, "Women in Space and Time" can be found in the text, *New French Feminisms: An Anthology*, eds Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron. Hermann is concerned with the "hierarchical function of space" and degrees of power and (place)ment (1980, 169). Hermann is aware of the potential violence of space and imbues that violence comes from a lived allegory or social order; an order not intended for her space, or her recline. She used images of a professor or a lawyer as separating spaces:

> In length, width, and height, order is established by division, the disposition of space for man is above all an image of power, the maximum power being attained when one can dispose of the space of others[.] (1980, 169)

Hermann agrees with Walter Benjamin that violence is law and law is violence. To cite myself again, at the risk of being self-referential, examining a disputed context between Walter Benjamin and Byung-Chul Ham:

> Walter Benjamin, in his essay, "Critique of Violence," argues that laws function as violence to protect those in power, stating, "[l]awmaking is power making and, to that extent, an immediate manifestation of violence" (1986, 295). Byung-Chul Han takes to issue some of the reading of Benjamin's marriage of law and violence in his short text, Topology of Violence. At one point Byung-Chul Han seems to dismiss Benjamin (and Giorgio Agamben) as being relics of a previous age, an age of world wars unprepared for the new world order of organized media, which he perhaps gives too much credit towards as being an indicator of contemporary mass existence. Byung-Chul Han separates law and violence, putting forward that, "[s]heer violence alone is not capable of forming spaces or creating locations. It lacks the space-building force of mediation. Thus it cannot produce a legal space. Only power, not violence, is capable of space building" (2018, 56). Both Walter Benjamin and Byung-Chul Han give consideration to (perhaps measures and degrees of) a pure (unalloyed) violence,….and law, that can be stapled free of the meditations of willful coercion. Where Benjamin sees a marriage of necessity and form, Byung-Chul Han sees an indication of uniqueness.

Contrary to Byung-Chul Han, Claudine Hermann indeed sees self-replication in the status of power and a dominating intruder onto the will of others. Hermann is concerned with the forced conformity that power of status brings into other people's spaces, stating, the "space of the mind is divided according to rules governing physical space: everyone must conform or risk a social sanction ranging from social

scorn to exclusion from the group, pure and simple" (1980, 169). Hermann sees an emblematic order from power into bred social strategy. She states that men enjoy a "full space" while women contend with "empty space" (1980, 169). For Hermann, maneuverability is directly tied to cognitive (re)placement with the tides of power structures built into the solemn societal squares of time.

There are aspects of the essay that may arguably be dated among some feminist circles, citations that are dubious, at least, simplistic under contemporary interdisciplinary study charts, though Herrmann denotes the struggle of feeling forced to 'catch up' in her statement, "perhaps, wisdom, would be highly desirable, just as it would be preferable, as we have seen in recent years, to establish a science based on harmony rather than domination" (1980, 173). The message of the essay is aged just enough to reflect the feelings of being subject to tassels, weights and the substandard expectations of social order upon women's experience of time and place. I would argue for many women those feelings haven't gone away, nor have those lived experiences. Therefore, the space that Herrmann indicates can be labeled as a legitimate realm of placement of power in masculine authority.

V.

"Feminist Theory and Economic Geography," (1994) a review by Andrew Leyshon and the prolific scholar, Liz Bondi, acquaints the reader with the 1994 IBG Conference, put together by the Women and Geography Study Group as well as the Economic Georgraphy Study Group. The session was titled, "Feminist Theory and Economic Restructuring." Many of the speakers worked to argue that the economic exploitation of women and women's labor in new capitalist functions highlights that a holistic insightfulness needs to give a strictly economic outlook a second review. Women's work was changing, as it continues to changes, and masculinarity (my term), with its advantages of being able to forfeit domestic duties to his partner, warrants the need to review the economics of humanistic geography through a feminist lens. Increasing privatization paired with the largest increase of women's work then coming out of the public sector created an economic climate of greater insecurity (Leyshon and Bondi, 1994). Humanist geography, feminist geography, and radical geography properly draw their lineage to the 1960s. Certainly, with the English translation of Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* in 1964, new possibilities, new avenues, new spaces became available where before were vacant trigonometry of resistance to moral restitution.

> Naturally, too, the door-knob could hardly be drawn in scale with the house, its function taking precedence over any question of size. For it expresses the function of opening, and only a logical mind could object that it is used to close as well as open the door. In the domain of values, whereas the door-knob opens more often than it closes. And the gesture of closing is always sharper, firmer and briefer than that of opening. (1964, 1994, 73). – *The Poetics of Space,* from the chapter, "House and Universe"

Rightly placed, emblems of feminist geography can properly be traced to First Wave feminism and the accompanying deconstruction of women's work and "women's space." There is a serene sense of a mechanical duplication in the natural reproduction of the slow, but evident progress into applied theory being utilized among professionals. Though, of course, economic materialism did indeed and does maintain a stranglehold on a seismic attribution to an explication of human affairs. Susan Stanford Friedman, in her text, *Mappings: Feminism and the Cultural Geographies of Encounter,* states that with her text-project she intends to "move feminism 'beyond' theorizing difference to theorizing the spaces

in between difference" (1998, 68). Friedman humbly proclaims that her work in not the first to move towards these analyses from various fields and the feminist subgroups within those various disciplines, but puts forwards that these movements "constitute a new geography of movement of intercultural contact within the context of shifting power relations" (1998, 68). Friedman further states,

> The explanatory power for feminism of this migratory geography of borders moves simultaneously in two directions: the descriptive, delineating networks of existing syncretisms (positive and negative) in everyday life; and the utopic, forging pathways of possible connection, affiliation, and reconciliation. (1998, 68)

Stationary assemblages of difference and power seems unlikely to have ever been the case. The only manner in which feminist expositions of power and influence would not make their mark, through conferences or street-ware bases is through totalitarian oppression that stymie intellectual, interpersonal, and prosperous growth. Of course, the problem not being resolved is that the introduction of feminist thinking into masculine or economic spheres is only a step towards alleviation from post-totalitarian, consumer mandated applied political science of neoliberal disposal and the accompanying suffering of millions of people.

Like Gaston Bachelard's door-knobs, so acutely observed through a behavioral discourse, the poetry of motions towards feminist dialects can bring a seismic shift away from power-sharing masculinarity, but much like the Seneca Falls Convention, articulation without application delineates the proscribed choice of freedoms. Without the basket in hand of the acquired rewards for lived potential and labors of choice, difference multiplies. Feminist theory intertwined with geography more aptly names those barriers that we may, hopefully, postulate on the weaknesses of masculinarity so as to (re)tame its imposing configurations. Naming is not without its religio-psychology. The cultural indices of naming allow both the one doing the articulating and the one living the freedoms being ascribed to meet the potential for a free-form tomorrow where "[n]aturally, too, the door-knob could hardly be drawn in scale with the house" and the universal meets the interpersonal.

VI.

I first encountered the topic of spatiality through literature. More specifically, though only briefly mentioned, in Dr. Valerie Sweeney Prince's text, *Burnin' Down the House: Home in African American Literature*. The topic of spatiality was only lightly touched upon though it reflected an ontological belonging to one's present moment, occupation, family, and place in time. The larger topic of exploring the theme of home, thought by some to be the most commonly sought theme in all of literature, was later explored in the Toni Morrison novel, *Home*. I have often wondered if Morrison's novel was inspired by Dr. Prince's text, as I know from Dr. Prince's stories that the two of them did meet at least once and had an extended conversation during a dinner.

There is a parallel between spatial envelopment and one's or one's character's visitation with reality and invitation into a moment that eclipses definition. Representation does not hide from our sights, but beams on high for us to see where we are located in the cartography of the indices of realization. This is much like Dr. Prince's accentuation of her character analyses in *Burnin' Down the House.* Robert T. Tally, Jr., in his book, *Spatiality* (2013), drives into representation and the author, stating,

> The phrase “representation of reality” might be used to describe the goals of both literature and cartography, provided it is understood that both fields only represent reality through figurative means. If various genres, such as the epic or the novel, represent reality in particular, identifiable, and distinctive ways, then one might say that the literary cartography is determined, at least in part, by narrative form. (2013, 59)

Indeed, narratology is a distinct indicator of the fermenting truculent ontological struggle between reality and form; expression and indicators of recess of being. In Albert Murray’s celebrated work, *The Hero and the Blues*, he comments that “the writer who deals with the experience of oppression in terms of the dynamics of antagonistic cooperation works in a context which includes the whole range of human motivation and possibility” (1995, first published in 1973, 49). What is the “whole range of human motivation and possibility” other than an ontological recovery from crisis, to fermentation, to resolve through spatial difference. That which is figurative is wholly doctrinal. That which is doctrinal, through literary means, incites characterization into sublimity. That which is sublime is easily cross-referenced into an ontological discourse and is a production of space and place.

This production of space and place is inherent representations of reality as intersectional. Sharlene Mollett and Caroline Faria, in their *Gender, Place, and Culture* article, “The spatialities of intersectional thinking: fashioning feminist geographic futures” (2018) put forward that, “intersectionality was, at its inception, already a deeply spatial theoretical concept, process and epistemology, particularly when read through careful and serious engagement with Black Feminist Thought. In short, the interlocking violence of racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and capitalism constitute a spatial formation” (2018, 2). How does this reify an author’s deliberative representations in the context of feminist struggles in art as collaborative with reality? Mollett and Faria continue, and this is a very important point,

> The entire framework…must be rethought and recast’ (Crenshaw 1989, 140; Moraga and Anzaldúa 2015). Writing more recently, scholars argue that intersectionality serves as ‘analytic sensibility’ (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013). An analysis is not simply intersectional by employing the term, rather it ‘is the adoption of an intersectional way of thinking about the problem of sameness and difference and its relation to power […]’, making the point that it is ‘what intersectionality does, rather than what intersectionality is’ (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013, 795). (2018, 3)

The codices of analytic discussion is a process of discovery for the reader. It is narrative empathy to inquire towards both the deleterious direction and the entirety of one’s own representation of reality in a collaborative effort with the literary formations on the page. The word catharsis is not apt, but an extension of that working body of idealization in the term would be adroit. The author’s or critic’s representation of reality as an intersectional mode of direction towards a cartography of “analytic sensibility” codifies the indicators of education and praxis as motivations of direction. In that, we find a liberation of a thought through an ontological rhythm that has the potential to withstand and extend an invitation to a measurement of reality that the author or critic seeks to clarity. The emphasis on spatiality is a trajectory more than a concluding end and it’s shape is that which escapes relations to power in how it defines one’s ability to stand above it, identify, and name systematic power for the future.

VII.

To cite a length Pamela K. Gilbert's essay, "Sex and the modern city: English studies and the spatial turn," from *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (eds. Barney Warf and Santa Arias),

> [A]s both Foucauldians and Marxists agree, human experience of space is always mediated by human relations with the world, material and discursive. Space is, then, not an Euclidean given; it is a materiality which we always experience both temporally and through a number of beliefs and practices. Most theorists posit two types of space superimposed on or coexisting with each other: physical space and social space (what Neil Smith calls relative space). Physical space encompasses both the natural or "given" and the built environment, and of course, as Smith points out, nature is itself produced, both ideologically and physically, through human interaction with the land, and through various scientific practices which seek to measure it. Place – the particularities of a named space experienced as unified with clear boundaries, characteristics, and history – was often asserted as charged with meaning against the abstraction of modern space. Place could be claimed as home, as related to the construction of identity and values. From both the feminist and the Marxist sides, ideas of place were eventually critiqued – even attacked – as nostalgic mystifications of inequality and essentialism. (103)

Home and concepts of home become target sites for sources of conflict and sites of oppression, built upon a history of informing a place of its unlimited conjecture of more-real-than-life tropes and confusion of resources; as wastelands of embodied beads of desire where we seek freedom and stages of resistance. Commonality between feminism and Marxism is often glossed over, perhaps not always explored as the unique identifiers of gender is or capitalism incursions, though clearly they are abetted towards many mutual inclinations to freedom of thought and resilience under pressure. Kathleen M. Kirby elaborates further in her *boundary 2* article, "Thinking through the Boundary: The Politics of Location, Subjects, and Space" (1993) how the body and locality are uniquely tied, as I touched upon in the last section. Freedom from the oppression of place is to be explored through an understanding of space and the foundations of demarcated rhythms of holistically global artifice and acupuncture of spanning time with our senses towards the reasoning of neglect. Kirby states,

> Space has the capacity to figure many of the different aspects of identity – the psyche as volume, the body as container, discourse as spatial network, groups as closed circles, and the aloof expanses of geography and nation. Space brings together the material and the abstract, the body and the mind, the objective interaction of physical subjects and the elusive transience of consciousness (or the unconscious). Space is our environment, it links us to our environment and seems to fortify a distinction between self and environment, girding (and guarding) an interiority. As a metaphorical substrate, space provides the very medium for measuring interconnection and difference, similarity and distance-markers that become important in evaluating the possibilities of coalition or the desirability of separatism. Space, then, seems to offer a medium for articulating-speaking and intertwining-the many facets, or phases, of subjectivity that have interested different kinds of theory: national origin, geographic and territorial mobility (determined by class, gender, and race), bodily presence and limits, structures of consciousness, and ideological formations of belonging and exclusion. (174)

This is seen in literature as a form, but this form is much more triumphant in its dispersal through time as a weight on which structured “reality” rests. Yes, through literature we can begin to attest to our breaking points, but there is a wide margin between negotiating the storyform and reigniting the cacophony of bonds which restrain our reasoned intellectualism from asserting our potential onto real space. Roxanne R. Reed writes in “The Restorative Power of Sound: A Case for Communal Catharsis in Toni Morrison’s Beloved” (*The Journal of Feminist Studies of Religion,* 2007), that “[t]he process of spiritual development is figured in Morrison’s novels as salvation. The concept of re-memory (remembrance) recurs in Morrison’s novels and facilitates the redemption. The catalyst for re-memory comes through sound, and for the characters in *Beloved* sound assures communal salvation as the ultimate goal” (66). Here an instigator of release of a physical embodiment of the unexplored emotional depth as indicated and exposed through “sound” that feels out its space and harvests the rhythm of space-time’s journey into the unknown that is always-already known through communal experience. Memory is narrative. Memory is also a catalyst for change.

What is remembrance but concentration through time? And in that a breach into space, or, a place that neglects the reasoning of time. Feminist circles have reasoned that without liberation from First World market competitive dominance, resistance on the fronts in non-First World nations is a constant struggle that does not guarantee victory in space or time or through commercial assets. As Audre Lorde proclaimed, “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.” When First World feminists uphold the values of glass-ceiling victories to bring wealth and power to the individual, but not liberation or even the tools of liberation to the global marketplace then place, here, is indeed justified to be “ critiqued – even attacked – as nostalgic mystifications of inequality and essentialism.” We demystify space through literature, as Roxanne R. Reed is alluding to, but through that process we must take the next step and demystify our own enclaves of neglected staged rebellion. For in that space of neglected staged rebellion is the neglected body that will continue to despair within the confines of spaces of whiteness and capitalism.

Monetized Empathy and the Conditioning of Violence-Capitalism

Among the mass protests on the Easter weekend, there were only three in my red state. It was the most predictable three cities, the three largest cities. What was interesting to me is that in my city the central focus of the protestors signs and chanting was in defense of Harvard which is currently in a crisis dealing with massive budget cuts. What an action to take. With so much poverty in my tricounty area, the deep red disregard for human life, or ritual of mostly keeping local politicians in their seats for life, they have never made living conditions better for the most poor. Almost no action in the decades I have been here. I have left and come back a number of times. I know this state disregards to most poor. That is absolute.

However, there have never been protests for the poor. If I remember correctly, there was one march, on one occasion when the Poor People's Campaign, led by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II himself, marched in this city. There was quite a welcoming from the black community, which disproportionately live in the poorest areas of the tricounty area. But under the current administration, what got people out to protest was concern for Harvard. Yes, budget cuts to Harvard are deeply harmful, not just for them, but for everyone. A specialist in new cancer research at Harvard is currently being held in a cell for immigrants. My own alma mater, Johns Hopkins, also does significant cancer research as well as other medical research, but they also lost a great deal of funding.

Still, there is no escaping that Harvard is and does provide for the master-class. Harvard is inaccessible to people living in the poorest areas downtown, but concern for Harvard is what this town was most concerned to protest on behalf of. Not the poor. Not kidnapped immigrants. Not the wellbeing of their own neighbors. I found it very curious and not surprising at all, given what I know about the abject lack of social consciousness in this area. I have noted a few times what the theory of monetized empathy states. Please all me to repeat some of that here:

Theory of Monetized Empathy states that people are more likely to be oppressed by other people if they lack financial well-being. Intersectionality still applies. This is a holistic theory, all encompassing, and true.

Given the reality of economic inequality and humanity's refusal to intellectually entertain abolishing currency, we are left with the reality that we would be seen under this gaze. We are what we are. I am not saying there is not a healthy place for idealism in our collective cultures, but there is a big difference between idealism and deluding ourselves. We are dark creatures. We always have been. We think society has advanced, but for whom? And to what degree? And with what promptness? I have been giving some thought to what I call the theory of monetized empathy, which states that people are more likely to be oppressed by other people if they lack financial well-being. Intersectionality still applies. This takes nothing away from intersectionality. It does indicate that the voices heard at the

lowest volume are those without the capital to warrant discussion by the upperclasses (plural, because there are many segments).

I was reading "The Dialectics of Ecology and Ecological Civilization" and the author cites *Global Change and the Earth System*. I did a search for the book. It was actually a bit difficult to find. Springer is asking $99.00 for the eBook, but you can download a PDF of the book, free, Open Access here. I also noted that *Monthly Review* cites this book quite often.

I felt this segment of the article contributed a good deal to what I briefly mentioned dealing with the Theory of Monetized Empathy,

> The book Global Change and the Earth System, written by a number of respected scientists, notes: "In a world in which the disparity between the wealthy and the poor, both within and between countries, is growing, equity issues are important in any consideration of global environmental management." Moreover, it is crucial to note that this systemic crisis has not directly led to a transformation of society toward sustainability. On the contrary, it has been co-opted by neoliberalism, exacerbating the crisis.

Monetized empathy is indeed cyclical. We can even see it rushing forward internationally, among so many nations in the world over the current tariffs controversy.

This submission to vacate any resemblance of human compassion for those of a lower class status, a construct, that so many are forced to live through and suffer through just because of the pleasant wellbeing of the master classes, is violence. Poverty is Violence.

The recent actions of class-elite's explication of poverty inherits a history of racial hygienic cleansing that seeks to root out "not just mental and physical diseases and so-called defects, but also poverty, criminality, alcoholism, prostitution, and other social problems [that were understood as being] based in biology and inherited." (Leonard J. Davis, ed., The Disabilities Studies Reader New York: Routledge, 2006, 95). Class regimes situational understanding of poverty as a social problem that is distant and elusive and not something easily addressed under the terms of intersectional justice, is the mandate of feminist readings of biblical verses that we must not detract from our station until "There shall be no needy among you" (Deut. 14:4). hooks maintains an inviting discourse, as Lisa Guenther notes, that places those in power as able to meet those without. Guenther questions were there can be resistance to domination in this meeting which I find is necessary to quote at length:

> What is this margin of resistance, and how might one inhabit it differently, depending on which side of a hierarchical social binary (such as white/ black, man/woman, rich/poor) one is positioned? Borrowing a phrase from Levinas scholar Alphonso Lingis, I propose to consider the margin as a "community of those who have nothing in common": a coalition of subjects brought together not by a shared attribute or essence, nor even by a common social position, but rather by a desire to resist oppression in all its forms. The point of such a coalition would not be to form a third identity position between black and white, nor to claim that race doesn't matter, but rather to foster relations of solidarity that cross the tracks of identity in order to both analyze the systematic patterns of domination and privilege that structure subjectivity, and also to build upon those exceptional moments that rupture the totality of domination or testify to its incompleteness (Lisa Guenther, "The Ethics and

Politics of Otherness: Negotiation Alterity and Racial Difference," philoSOPHIA, Vol. 1.2, 2011, 198-199).

The violence of poverty is tied to the desperate action of provoking God:

Provoking God is like a river. Perhaps it is pure. Perhaps it is polluted. Perhaps it passes directly through your town or through a village on the other side of the world. The river dances whether it is tainted or not. It only knows to move. It has a history just as we have through our language. It came from some place. It has a reference point. We all have our reference points. We can use that to forward our actions to the crest of a vision and dream of a better way, for our community and ourselves. Our actions must be collectively centered. This river does not know how to be self-centered. It is inherently communal. It is the drift of our sandy thoughts in the wind that bend and shape an idealized future without demands from inaccessible portraits of fatigue and unrest. We can bend ourselves to the stars. It is internal and it is outward. In bending to that shape we distort derision to be exposed for what it is. If we have the heart to petition God, then we can dispel the monsters that shape derision and conquest and bend new shapes out of humanity to joy and eternal triumph, pushing through the city from our thoughts to our actions and realized in the quake of what flows from the [center of our collective created selves] and our esteem for each other (Tilley, "Provoking God" 2017, 2018, 2023, 2024).

When de Saints: African American Historicity and the Pursuit of Justice (Notes and rough drafts)

I.

Mishnah Qiddushin 3 outlines that a *mamzer* may achieve his freedom if his parents are sold into slavery and are then freed, freeing him into normalized relations with Jewish society with all the rights and privileges thereto. Here, through ancient subjugation one finds a pathway into privileged society.

Emily A. Owens, in her article, “Promise: Sexual Labor in the Space Between Slavery and Freedom” recounts the story of Carmélite, a young woman who in 1851 sought protective custody through imprisonment in order to secure her release from sexual bondage. She had been sold to the owner of a brothel under the legal jurisdiction that an enslaved person sold under such conditions would then be free, though she remained property and was not able to attain manumision and release from sexual servitude. Carmélite remained enslaved due to the terms of her sexual labor, being perceived as responsible for her own disposition and not worthy of attaining freedom.

> The words “will become free” inserted a very particular temporality of freedom into the practice of enslaved sexual labor and invoked a history that linked sexual labor to freedom. As Diana Williams writes, the linkage of sexual labor to freedom in the history of African American women focuses on the agency of the women involved, unwittingly producing a narrative “that women of color willingly trapped themselves in a prison of their own making.” (Owens 2017, 181-182)

Narrative maintenance and re-provocation from slave-owners and laws assured the statutes of bondage in perpetuity without even the potential favor and release from grievances that *mamzerim* might enjoy. Re-victimization was assured through legal means and social convention. There was a systemic relationship of slave codes “linked to interracial intimacies” (Owens 2017, 187). Laws captured racial and sexual violence and reflected the very act of the capture of the individual. The spirit of these laws do not truly change over time, but adapt to new resonances and institute fresh policies that malign and contain rights of an individual and the assurance of personal safety. On more than one occasion I have heard white, southern men state, “I have never owned a slave” as justification to exclude civil expenditures and projects a narrative to rejects the reality that history conserves its forefathers’s interests, both metaphysically and in the pursuit of sustaining alienating powers of influence.

Katherine McKittrick, in her book, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and The Cartographies of Struggle*, assesses the spatial dynamics of the inter-relational, sustained passage and pathway of Black Women releasing justice-seeking into the intra-spatial dialogue of culture, language, and literature. As we witness in Carmélite’s confinement-story, “marginalization is an experiential geography that highlights ideological confinement and the peripheral place of black gendered bodies” (McKittrick

2006, 55). Whether the Second District Court in New Orleans in 1851 or the urban spread of metropolis-minor in the reflection of segregated swimming pools, the enclosure of sequestered bonds highlights the periphery of in-dormant historicities of freedom-taking *actions*. Carmélite released the reasonableness of not just her freedom, but all Black women in bondage who were subject to sexual servitude by white, male oppressors. Those men found allies in the laws of disparity and norms of subjugation.

McKittrick's analysis and exposition takes tenure in opposition to segregated norms. Carmélite's struggle is central to the locale and heritage of time of space where "Black geographies […] illustrate the ways in which the raced, classed, gendered, and sexualized body is often an indicator of spatial options and the ways in which geography can indicate racialized habitation patterns; they are places and spaces of social, economic, and political denial and resistance" (McKittrick 2006, 7). Where Carmélite is stationed in history, she speaks forth from a great force of plate tectonics of emotive logic that cannot be denied, but by intentional force and willing obtusity of a persistent oleographic of "Virginian Luxuries" that is more often than not, flipped to reveal the dark backside of the linguistic code of spatial authorities over sociospatial bodies.

The determinant factor that unveils Carmélite's past-centered struggle and McKittrick's dialogue into a feminized space of approach and unmoved appraisal into the bitter-waters of where previous struggles is the light shown into, not just the distant-now, but the forever-hold on a matrimony of oppression that continues to be taught, continues to be orchestrated, continues to be silenced as though it is naught, and, most importantly, continues to be resisted – resisted with complete composure – from the bell halls to the stomping grounds to the lecturing spaces. There are few more composed spaces than that which Black femininity and expression coincide with a light on a resistance-struggle for peace and alterity of the law.

II.

Walter Benjamin, in his essay, "Critique of Violence," argues that laws function as *violence* to protect those in power, stating, "[l]awmaking is power making and, to that extent, an immediate manifestation of violence" (1986, 295). Byung-Chul Han takes to issue some of the reading of Benjamin's marriage of law and violence in his short text, *Topology of Violence*. At one point Byung-Chul Han seems to dismiss Benjamin (and Giorgio Agamben) as being relics of a previous age, an age of world wars unprepared for the new world order of organized media, which he perhaps gives too much credit towards as being an indicator of contemporary mass existence. Byung-Chul Han separates law and violence, putting forward that, "[s]heer violence alone is not capable of forming spaces or creating locations. It lacks the space-building force of mediation. Thus is cannot produce a legal space. Only power, not violence, is capable of space building" (2018, 56). Both Walter Benjamin and Byung-Chul Han give consideration to (perhaps measures and degrees of) a *pure* (unalloyed) violence,….and law, that can be stapled free of the meditations of willful coercion. Where Benjamin sees a marriage of necessity and form, Byung-Chul Han sees an indication of uniqueness

It is, perhaps, not altogether inappropriate to state that Byung-Chul Han perceives of a perversion of the State that has embedded inside it a potentiality, as though it is not tied to slavery and ransom. This romanticism can be the same worldview that looks as though there is the benefit of fond mercy of the

Charleston, South Carolina of the early 1800s. Amrita Chakrabarti Myers writes in *Forging Freedom: Black Women and the Pursuit of Liberty in Antebellum Charleston,* that South Carolina had "become something of a haven for free blacks prior to 1820" (2011, 48). Women outnumbered men in those who were able to purchase their freedom. South Carolina demanded that those manumitted must be self-sufficient and not be put in a position to be considered a "burden" on the state. Many Black women were freed as skilled workers. In Charleston County, between 1801 and 1820, among the records of manumission, 62% were female (2011, 48). But Byung-Chul Han would not see the law as an acquaintance to murder, instead, he might insist slavery not be law at all, but a diversion in time. Still, he cannot argue that it is not the same power that he holds as unique that forces us to separate degrees of freedom and fortitude within the bonds of slavery. If power and law are married it is an indicator of the stationed time and space of violence, which disputes Byung-Chul Han's dismissal of Benjamin despite Byung-Chul Han's perceived dissolution of violence through sanctioned spaces of power.

Charleston was among New Orleans, Baltimore, and Washington, DC as the major cities with the highest percentage of a free Black population. More than half of Charleston's population were women and in 1850 roughly 40% of South Carolina's free Blacks were living there (Myers 2011, 31). Then "mass hysteria in the midst of [the] reenslavement crisis" came along with the "anti-free black laws that were being advanced in the General Assembly" (Myers 2011, 208). There can be no separation of law and power as united in a tied bond to wed violence with the absolution of power. Free Blacks in Charleston literally petitioned and lobbied those in the community to honor previous standards of the degrees of freedom permitted under state law so that they could avoid losing all the was gained in the slow manumission of some individuals, who in turn purchased and secured an appearance of freedom for others through the measures of the law and social constructs. A law of violence meted out by degrees of force and not subject to Byung-Chul Han's misinterpretation of Benjamin's completely separate vision of a "pure," divine violence that is not orchestrated by the will of power in the hands of men.

With the increase in arrests, free Blacks in Charleston began to flee the South and migrate north. Amrita Chakrabarti Myers writes that by "November of 1860, roughly eight hundred free people of color had left Charleston and headed for Philadelphia with the help of white friends and business associates" (2011, 209). These connections and bonds formed through former slave's skilled labor, the same that attested to their winning their freedom, arrived as safe-havens for distributed justice in a capitalist hallmark of degrees of worth petitioned by degrees of violence that was made whole through law. This mired law in the accustomed journey of labor and freedom did not resist the ugliest motivations of humanity, but, instead, those motives protected itself. We still perceive of a law that protects us from violence as a higher order principle that delegates transitions of law and order across time boundaries to be perfected and meted into a discourse of freedom.

This discourse is what Byung-Chul Han esteems as a liberator of souls through a law, a pattern of justice, that has a space wrapped outside of time. Though Walter Benjamin saw a little farther into an structuralism of equality that exists by law that protects violence for its own use. Benjamin understood punitive measures of the law as a protectorate of its own institution, not order, but the self-preservation of power: "Its purpose is not to punish the infringement of law but to establish new law. For the exercise of violence over life more than in any other legal act, law reaffirms itself" (1986, 286). This

prose, of course, is in reference to the death penalty. What we secure in a society that is orchestrated in such a way to protect demoting some degrees of life over others, some skills more than most, and other fossils of persuasion that force difference and the deterrence of othering is a bond-capitalism that annotates to murder. We only exercise in degrees of its limits, but the law is violence and it is measured by our tolerance.

III.

At her keynote address at the Fourth National NWSA (National Women's Studies Association) Convention, July 17, 1982, which took place at Humboldt State University in California, Angela Davis began her speech discussing Julia Wilder and Maggie Bozeman of Alabama, in the Black Belt. They worked to assist African Americans to get registered to vote. Because of this, they were charged with voter fraud and in January, 1982 were sentenced to four and five years by a White jury, completing the circle of a system designed to restrict African American participation in elections (Davis 1982, 5).

For Angela Davis's complete 1982 NWSA speech, see here: http://www.jstor.org/stable/40004176.

Angela Y. Davis demonstrates in her classic text, *Women, Race, and Class*, that the types of instances of the oppression of civil rights are manifestations of trends. They are trends that were seeded with slavery, on to the rejection of Reconstruction, into Jim Crow, and the struggle for civil rights, from housing and banking restrictions to equal accessibility in public domains. The American women's struggle for bodily autonomy, particularly African American women, also followed this trend. The expectation of forced motherhood violently imposed on those women in the bondage of slavery continued the with the struggle for easy access to birth control into the late 20th century and, as can be seen by any citizen with honest motivations, continues as a diligent witness to crimes against humanity in the 21st centurty. "Voluntary motherhood," Angela Davis writes in her discussion of nineteenth-century feminists, "was considered audacious, outrageous, and outlandish by those who insisted that wives had no right to refuse to satisfy their husbands' sexual urges" (1983, 202). "Voluntary motherhood" challenged men's possessive domination over women's bodies and sought to redress historic impositions where men refused responsibility towards a conduct of moral order. The same refusal of a moral code of conduct imposed limitations of movement and political identification on Julia Wilder and Maggie Bozeman which continues today in the southern states with racist partisan gerrymandering.

There is a comparison to be made between the liberty of movement within political activism and participation and the control over women's bodies. (M)otherhood has often been the first source of restrictive conquest by the oppressor historically and sociologically. Steps to liberate women's bodies from the grip of men works to both free women from bondage as well as liberate civil society from dominating oppressive conjunctions of dialects of tribal institutions designed to be a violence that preserves lawmaking. "Free womb" laws in Brazil and Cuba centered on (m)otherhood with the intention of a perceived pragmatic social progress for eventual abolition. Former slaves were able to take families and slavemasters to court to claim guardianship of their own children still in the bondage of ownership to others as historian Camillia Cowling elaborates in detail in her article, "'As a slave woman and as a mother': women and the abolition of slavery in Havana and Rio de Janeiro" (2011). With these first instances of mother's reunited with their children, social order moves closer to a

nurturing entity and away from structural oppression. These bonds still can point the way out of institutionalized inequality through societal and policy shifts that prioritize the family.

We can learn from former trends which direction is needed as well as have within ourselves the ability to envision what peacemakers (opposed to lawmakers) practice as liberating sanctity. Scholar Stephanie Li, in her book, *Something Akin to Freedom: The Choice of Bondage in Narratives by African American Women*, also conceives of the resistance of motherhood as a location of permanent future gains, writing, "[b]y understanding female resistance within a context that appreciates the enslaved woman's complex social network, we may begin to conceptualize a form of freedom that works through and within relationships. I term this approach "intra-independence" as it emphasizes the power to choose the preservation of certain relationships over conditions of individual autonomy" (2010, 24). Personal, spiritual, physical, and psychological autonomy brings rest and restoration to communities with histories and lived realities of engineered dominance. Social appraisal, or rather, the arithmetic and science of oppression, has been meted out with deliberate intention. Comparatively, our longing for a way out can be equally strategic. Liberation begins with mothers. Sanctified liberation begins with mother's autonomy. When we move the direction that attends to those needs and elevates the personal liberties and constructions of "intra-independence" than the violence of lawmaking will give way to the prosperity of peacemaking.

IV.

One can hear Sterling A. Brown's, her professor during her time at Howard, influence in the folk architecture in the end of the conclusion to Sherley Anne Williams's book *Give Birth to Brightness: A Thematic Study in Neo-Black Literature.*

In the realm of literature where Black writers are seeking to give concrete forms to Black experience in this country, to posit and describe in all its varied facets the large controlling images that give philosophers meaning to the facts of ordinary life, to express the archetype which in turn reveals hidden attitudes and experiences, the Black writer is making not new gods, but a new language and mythology. And perhaps by providing Black people with another view of their experience, showing the basic relationships between their own heroes and the rest of society, these writers have provided another facet to the prism of Black mythology. (1972, 229)

Sterling A. Brown thematized mythological crossings, searching for home, in his poem, "Crossing" from the collection, *No Hiding Place*:

This is not Jordan River

There lies not Canaan

There is still

One more wide river to cross.

This is the Mississippi

And the stars tell us only

That this is not the road.

[…]

(1980, 204)

Locating *home* as spiritual, as mythological, as a quest for a centenary reproof from dispelled appraisals, Brown specialized in telling the reader that they are still on the road, together, passing over rivers that do not lead home yet. Dr. Valerie Prince's brilliant book, *Burnin' Down the House: Home in African American Literature,* positions home as a quest and an endeavor lived through literature as the African American experience. I took three of Dr. Prince's classes and got to know her as my adviser. She is just as brilliant in person, consistently, as she is in this book. Dr. Prince initiates her discussion, "[t]he search for justice, opportunity, and liberty that characterized the twentieth century for African Americans can be described as a quest for home" (2005, 1). Dr. Prince continues, "A look back upon the century of African American literature shows that home is ubiquitous and nowhere at the same time" (2005, 2). Home is concrete and just as ever for certain as it is out of grasp. The mythmaking of storytelling is in its own creation a search for home, away from the rebelliousness of substandard demands on our time and attention for market gains and ordinary comforts, should we be so fortunate to have the opportunity. Home is where deliverance plays its key role in the arrival of mercy, justice, and a non-calculated attrition of forced locations.

Toni Morrison's *Home* also demonstrates not being at home or truly able to occupy locations of comfort. Cee, having "laughed with wild glee," being overjoyed by the comfort of a nice bed is warned not to laugh loudly. In a moment that should feel as at least the imitations of the comforts of home, she is told laughing is "frowned on here." Further, the discussion illustrates the dislocation of home: "Well, remember those daughters I mentioned being away? They're in a home. They both have great big heads. Cephalitis, I think they call it. Sad for it to happen to even one, but two? Have mercy" (2012 63). Home is transplanted as a place, the very naming of a place, where one occupies outside the home under the duress of illness where being permanently away is called being at (a) home. In Toni Morrison's short essay, "The Foreigner's Home," she remarks on the demands of nativism and imaginary borders, stating, "[t]he spectacle of mass movement draws attention inevitably to the borders, the porous places, the vulnerable points where the concept of home is seen as being menaced by foreigners" (2017, 94). The persistent state of the grandiosity of borders and the possessiveness towards lands is the nature flux from a colonial mapping towards the estates of ownership of land, ownership of peoples, ownership over the established natural productivity of individual labor without the rewards of the release from confinement or liberty to build and have a home. On what land does home locate itself and towards what ends does the maps of persuasion of livelihood find rest from the bars of delayed justice?

V.

Identification of African American Families in Displaced Societal Structures

Comparative memory between family and society can be divergent or equally challenging. When that social structure upholds, historically and presently, barriers to freedom of movement, expression, livelihood, survival, or critical exegesis of life, the borders between the fragments social idioms and closeness of family can become entangled. Often and ontological proximity alleviates the distance the social order forces between the self and others. Feminist researchers have noted that when interviewing

African American women, they were given “insider” access to their lives and circumstances, being Black women themselves (Few et. al, 2003, 207). Researchers made a forward, intentional effort to work within the localized cultural drifts of the community to put the subjects at ease. “Cultural competence involves the adaptation of approaches that reflect and respect the values, expectations, and preferences of those who the researcher is engaging,” Few, et al. write in “Sister-to-Sister Talk: Transcending Boundaries and Challenges in Qualitative Research with Black Women” (2003, 208). This speaks to a general unease with those might judge, condemn, or be general outsiders of the group and community. Those who would be viewed as unable to participate in the culture from a lived experience might be thought of as impractical for the occupation of engaging with the community. Insincerity is always easily stopped and always watched for, if not assumed. This speaks not just to researchers, but big media would certainly exploit these relational skills as well.

Ann duCille cites and works from Harvard sociologist Orlando Patterson to suggest that the very traditional foundation of the African American family evolved out of sequestered roles inherited from delegations and limitations from slavery (2009). This sense of social cohesion within and about African American families relies a bit on stereotypes about strictly involved Black mothers and disengaged Black fathers if not being dismissive of family units altogether, though it seems unlikely that was deCille’s starkest intention. At least not from a perspective that is dismissive of the cordial units of respect Black families bring into each other. This also functions as a sense of relational skills, that, in this manner, are exploited in the form of social patterns, not meant to exclude or isolate from those that might be deemed outsiders, but to strengthen the bonds of familial love in the face of disparities that are forced on these families. I would argue, unlike that which duCille stemming from Patterson seems to be focused on, it is the larger structural societal infrastructure that has inherited the most from slavery with society having far less plasticity than families, on the far end.

To quote a portion of Michael S. Harper’s poem, “The Militance of a Photograph in the Passbook of a Bantu under Detention,”

His father’s miner’s shoes

stand in puddles of polish,

the black soot baked

into images of brittle torso

an inferno of bullets laid

out in a letter bomb,

the frontispiece of one sergeant-

major blackening his mustache.

These are not the war-weary images of an individual committed to become displaced through an internal need to be broken, but are that which is of an external structural that is broken and being subject to participation in a hymn of sergeant-majors that are more flexible than the limitations imposed upon her or him. Harper writes, “I speak to myself as the woman / riding in the backseat talks / of this day,” denoting not an individual that reflects notions of disparity, but those inside a

concrete jungle of disparaging concerns and fimble rhythms where it is the individual who is strong, and not societal structures. Likewise, the researchers of the Few et al. paper find themselves being adroit by pairing with the individuals and not their own isolated socially sanctioned role. Likewise, it is not duCille and Patterson's identification of the family that is hemmed to displacement, but laws that displace it. It is this image-making that is displaced like "the frontispiece […] blackening his mustache."

VI.

Representation and Echoes of Exuberant Liberation in the Word "Juba"

In Sandra L. Gilman's essay, "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature," she outlines the parameters of representation as an idea and ontological constant. Representations communicate the physics of ideas that either persuade the viewer or reader towards the abscesses of one idea or move less spatially; refrained within the tight, rigid barriers of their preconceived constitution. Representation is sociological, in art and literature, as in social constructs more immediately confronted. Gilman writes,

Specific individual realities are thus given mythic extension through association with the qualities of a class. These realities manifest as icons representing perceived attributes of the class into which the individual has been placed. The myths associated with the class, the myth of difference from the rest of humanity, is thus, to an extent, composed of fragments of the real world, perceived through the ideological bias of the observer. (1986, 223)

The work of art or story or diagram is always already apropos; steady within a class system reinforced with both casual and formal acquaintance with expected societal norms. Beauty, therefore, is not desire, but expectation. Rather, beauty is informed expectation from a cosmogenic dispel that is tied to the cast of an iron welded, still, free moving conductor.

This echo of representation was enforced in North Carolina during occasions of John Kunering, an extravagant Christmas ritual celebrated first by slaves and later freed-persons. Words used to describe John Kunering or John Canoeing have been "indulgence" or "exuberance" or, in the words of Douglas Mac Millan, existing in "the air of gruesome mirth" (1926, 53). Sterling Stuckey cites Dr. James Norcom in his book, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America,* stating,

> The slaves' pent-up emotion and sorrow and the encouragement from slave masters helped account for the indulgence of many North Carolina slaves in revelry and drink on Christmas and other holidays. "It is to be regretted," wrote Dr. James Norcom, "that drunkeness is too common on these occasions; but this also is habitually overlooked and never punished, unless it became outrageous or grossly offensive." Perhaps the recognition of the need for some release for slaves – a recognition of fear and guilt – caused North Carolina whites to encourage John Kunering and a festive air among slaves on the streets of their towns[.]" (2013, 120)

"[F]ear and guilt" may have motivated slave masters as well as a perverse form of entertainment, but this "release" by slaves was not altogether a white construct. "Africanity was demonstrated in mourning song and dance, in the transcendence of the spirit" and within those retained and released

emotional outbursts were the secretive songs of heritage and life experience being communicated from one diction to the next within pearls of swine (2013, 122). Sterling Stuckey cites a portion of the lyrics to exemplify what the slavesong's "monotonous cadence" may have conformed to, which I will cite in full:

My massa am a white man, juba!

Old misses am a lady, juba!

De children am de honey-pods, juba! Juba!

Krismas come but once a year, juba!

Juba! Juba! O, ye juba! (2013, 119)

A classic poem passed down in the oral tradition, from slavery to those who would write it down also includes the much contemplated word, juba.

JUba dis and JUba dat an

JUba killed my YALlow cat, O JUba,

JUba, JUba,, JUba, JUba, JUba. (Ward 1997, 3)

It is clear that classification from representation does not just occur *in writing* or a diagram or in story form or a drawing. The single word, "juba," disorients the outside listener as a nonsensical utterance and allows the reinforcement of class standing or biased reading while communicating to the inside group a harrowing sound of emotive sadness, a communal pathos that derides the common antagonist with language he cannot understand. The meta-representation is aware of itself and carries on from one sound to another a shared heritage and common bondage towards language that must be esteemed to the inside listener.

This clarity in the poem marks exuberance to any outside listener while communicating a sadness to those without bias in their listening. Similarly, this bias caused fractions in the Civil War, marking two times this song would be put to use as a national call to freedom; once in slavery, in defeat, and again in the angst of war. The reader can hear this word, this poem, as a rallying cry for freedom in the face of confederate agents thinking themselves supreme according to an order of saints, how they saw their own disposition in the national dialogue against slavery. These shades of nuance are as lived as Major Robert Anderson relocating his troops to Fort Sumter and the livid consequences that fell in the build up to secession (Sinha 2000, 251-254). Formally, more tired saints whisper the causing bind and bond of freedom while those too soon eclipsed echoes fragment the plasticity of the dream of freedom. Plasticity we see in representation, represented in plots of land with fragmented allowances and men determining what is allowed against other humans on that land, through enforced representation and the bias in the circles of their foregone persuasions.

VII.

Tzvetan Todorov and the Path from Behavioralist to Feminist Critiques towards an Educational Model

In Hortense J. Spillers essay, "Notes on an Alternative Model – Neither/Nor," from *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture,* she surveys William Faulkner in a study of negation of the Other and gender. Spillers states, "[t]he exterior other in positive identity is, for Faulkner, a female, and in the Faulknerian situation of the female, we gain good insight into the process of gender-making as a special outcome of modes of dominance" (2003, 305). At the heart of Spillers's context, as with so many other literary critics, is concern with the negation of history, of reality, of gender and race. Ralph Ellison also noted Faulkner's problematic dualism with African American identity, which combined with the specter of female subjugation, does not outright endorse Faulkner despite notedly being highly influenced by his craft. Ellison offers in "Twentieth-Century Fiction and the Mask of Humanity" from *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison* that "Faulkner [is] and example of a writer who has confronted Negroes with such mixed motives that he presented them in terms of both the 'good n*****' and the 'bad n*****' stereotypes, and who yet has explored perhaps more successfully than anyone else, either white or black, certain forms of Negro humanity" ([1964] 1995, 86). Of course, Ellison was a doctrinal universalist and would not utterly push aside what positive embellishment Faulkner could endorse of African American culture and individualism. While feminist criticism would not completely abandon such modes of acknowledgement, there are more axis points from which to critique than style or sociological outcomes of the times, which was disputed in its sense of productivity by James Baldwin.

Case logic is not without its delegation into symbiotic parts. Spillers expands on Faulkner's two-fold psychoanalytical play of gender and even as an admirer Ellison notes Faulkner's situational stance on *good* or *bad* fitting form. With voluble diction such analysis arises in which the creator is equally at the mercy of the characterizations. Spillers notes Tzvetan Todorov in her ontological-behavioral case study, which I find value in quoting at length:

> In his *Conquest of America,* Tzvetan Todorov distinguishes three dimensions of the problematics of alterity: (1) the *axiological* level – "the other is good or bad, I love or do not love him, or ….he is my equal or my inferior (for these is usually no question that I am good that I esteem myself"); (2) the *praxeological* level – the placing of distance or proximity between oneself and an imagined other – "I embrace the other's values, I identify myself with him; or else I identify the other with myself, I impose my own image upon him; between submission to the other and the other's submission, there is also a third term, which is neutrality, or indifference"; (3) the *epistemic* level – "I know or am ignorant of the other's identity….of course, there is no absolute here, but an endless gradation between the lower or higher states of knowledge." (2003, 305)

As stated above, Ellison clearly notes the axiological level while Spillers contrasts the latter half of the praxeological level from the context of feminist scholarship. Of course, both are concerned with the epistemic level. Elsewhere in *Conquest of America,* Todorov comments on the praxeological imposition of religion that "to impose one's will on others implies that one does not concede to that other the same humanity one grants to oneself" (1982, 179). A constructive post-colonialist assessment does not disdain the ontological or the situational. Todorov continues, "a thing is not imposed when one can choose another thing instead, and knows one can so choose. The relation of knowledge to power, as we were able to observe on the occasion of the conquest, is not contingent but constitutive" (1982, 180). The formation of power steals representation. It locks and withholds varied forms of the multitudes of

play and expression from all who do not identify with the, ultimately inert, placement of that perceived self. Power is stationary. It withholds those in its proximity from unifying principles of the plasticity of form.

At the risk of contradicting myself on the node of self-importance, to quote myself, “if we were to have a good governance model that emphasized the importance of self-value over inflated self-importance, individual actors would be less in the way of things and this alone would do wonders for communal perceptions of what it means to live together, in this shared space, localized and global” (2020). As Walter Benjamin noted, power exists to impose its own territorial existence. It does so at the expense of cross-cultural expression or matters of shared bonds and shared collectivity of authorization of form. It is worth pointing out that Tzvetan Todorov’s writings have been utilized by other scholars in explicating Octavia Butler’s *Kindred* (Sarah Eden Schiff) and Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* (Steven V. Daniels). Toni Morrison cites Tzvetan Todorov herself in her seminal essay “Unspeakable Things Unspoken: Afro-American Presence in American Literature.” So, too, have critical authors Roland Barthes, Paul de Man, and Frederic Jameson expounded from Todorov.

Feminist scholar, Susan S. Lanser, in “Feminist Literary Criticism: How Feminist? How Literary? How Critical?” cites Todorov at length from his essay in Henry Louis Gates, Jr.’s edited 1985 collection, *“Race,” Writing, and Difference*, (a collection from which I cite Sandra L. Gilman in my post, “Representation and Echoes of Exuberant Liberation in the Word ‘Juba’” (2019)) further commenting from Todorov and then postulating,

> Todorov’s mention of writers is a powerful reminder of the particular irony that a discipline devoted to the analysis of writing has been reluctant to examine its own discursive practices. It is worth asking ourselves why some of the most radical feminist theory is being produced in a language inaccessible to some of the most radical feminist activists. The turn toward a wider audience seems to me crucial for a critical literary feminism that could take part in a world-wide intellectual movement for social change. (Lanser 1991, 17)

Power dynamics are not without interpretation, but that must yield down to building up an educational model where the stance is not oblique. I am not disagreement with Lanser when I wrote,

> First must come the elimination of structural violence, then what must follow is the letting go of violence of the self. The educational model would prepare and sustain a path towards this deliverance, but not complete the work. A new pattern of selfhood must be explored expeditiously. An adroit sovereignty of self awaits those to release their importance over the Other in all matters of displaced rhythms of selfhood and false alliances of ego. To become another is to become oneself. It resolves interpersonal violence as well as spiritual malfeasance and the relenting whispers of arcane retributive glances towards denial of form. (2020)

It is true to form that an educational model pre-revolution, reintegration, and post-violence would need to summarize critical language in accessible and benevolent forms. To say I am in disagreement with Tzvetan Todorov with his momentary comment on a utopianism of violence would be excessive, but I do think he makes too minimalistic a point.

> Perhaps there is a simplistic utopianism in thus reducing matters to the use of violence, especially since violence, as we know, can take forms that are not really subtler but less obvious: can we say of an ideology or a technology that it is merely proposed when it is carried by every means of communication in existence? No, of course not. (*The Conquest of America*, 1982, 180).

If colonial power and post-WWI power structures are to be compared, to call the modern forging of oppression as utopian to those in authority would be eye-opening, though I do not think that is the horizontal witness to the motivation or indoctrination of these entities. In *A Passion for Democracy*, Todorov maintains his distance from commentary on violence, except to say "Freedom of the press is also complete, except for that which harms the integrity of the person (slander, incitement to *violence*) or of the community (appealing to the population or to a foreign enemy to overthrow the ruling power)" (1999, 43, my italics). Certainly, by these standards, in the contemporary West we have indeed given the press the extended freedom, without liability, to incite violence. The localized formula where this crest is laid out through commentary and conviction is in the home. This returns to Spillers explication of "the Faulknerian situation of the female" and "gender-making as a special outcome of modes of dominance" (2003, 305). Public language (the press) and private language (the home) mimic each other in straights and dominance; in routine and simplistic way-bent edification. From this it is clear that the pre-revolution of a post-violence society requires an educational model according to Lanser's plea that takes a "turn toward a wider audience" in its erudition of form and emulating the need for critique of invested sociological stations.

VIII.

"Unlimited Militarism," a Culture of Deafness, and Seeing the Watts Riots in 2020 Protests

What can be seen in the United States in 2020 with the casual overpass of the continuing Black Lives Matters movements and the militaristic response to peaceful protests is a culture of ingrained militarism. The white supremacists counter protests or demi-occupations are reflections of that American culture. The culture of deafness, the defeated self-interest of corporatized Americana and what Vaclav Havel referred to as the consumer stationed post-totalitarianism is an exaggerated form of grotesque theatre. As David R. Roediger writes in *How Race Survived U.S. History*, "'[I]t took the Watts riots' to make Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty add just seven from minority community organizations to his thirty-five person poverty board" (2008, 201). Such is the result of a culture of "unlimited militarism." To cite Edward Said, from *The Politics of Dispossession*,

> I defy anyone to tell me of one struggle for democracy, or women's rights, or secularism, and the rights of minorities that the United States has supported. Instead we have propped up compliant and unpopular clients, and turned our backs on the efforts of small peoples to liberate themselves from military occupation, while subsidizing their enemies. We have prompted unlimited militarism and engaged in vast arm sales […]. (1994, 296)

This genuine community of arbitrary and invested hate is maintained by cultural norms and the lack of governmental and communal attempts to rectify its past. The Watts riots is just one example where this culture of deafness was equally invoked to pass over the issues at hand and attempt to stranglehold a business-as-usual approach. What was termed the Watts riots included other neighborhoods that were

cordoned off; Watts, Central, Avalon, Florence, Green Meadow, Exposition, and Willowbrook, which captured 250,000 residents (Theoharis, 2018, 72). To isolate such a large community with the labeling of one key sector is again the erasure of compliance as well as the erasure of holistic ideas that could move the country forward towards healing and the manifestation of reconciliation.

The Voting Rights Act was signed August 6, 1965. On August 9th the Moynihan report was leaked by *Newsweek* portraying the "American dilemma of race" and from August 11th to 16th the Watts Riot confirmed the Moynihan report's findings that there was a "time bomb in the ghetto" (Ibran X. Kendi, from *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of racist Ideas in America*, 2016, 393). Again, the ghettoization, the reification of difference, the isolation from magnanimous reproach leads to the construction of a population not only ready to accept the terms of normalcy, but also to defend and demand it as we have seen in recent years with white terrorism on the streets of American traditionalism.

Jeanne Theoharis states in *A More Beautiful and Terrible History: The Uses of Misuses of Civil Rights History* that,

> Many public officials and local residents were "shocked" by the Watts riot, as it came to be called. Proclaiming California as a "state without racial discrimination," Governor Brown flew home immediately, informing reports that "nobody told me there was an explosive situation in Los Angeles." It was a willful, comforting shock. Even though the *Los Angeles Times* had covered many of the protests of the past decade, reporters and editors refused to call city leaders to account for their long deafness of Black grievances and instead helped legitimate this frame of surprise. (2018, 72).

This unwanted witnessing of trust is framed as a surprise, not as a long-term face saving tactic used by conflict resolution specialists, but as a temporary detraction to maintain the willful inability to bring conscience to change. Theoharis continues, "[t]he 'surprise' also obscured the role many in the city had played in dismissing Black protest and maintaining inequality. By erasing this long history of struggle, many Angelenos could conveniently evade responsibility for maintaining these systems of inequality and creating the conditions for the uprising (2018, 72)." What is evasion but a military tactic? Collective social consciousness has many avenues of departure, but to reel in one exposure of one frame at a time is a willful prelude of the maintenance of imparity.

Militaristic police presence at the various protests around the U.S. in 2020 is a reflection of white evasion in 1965. To depart from responsibility is to actively seek to maintain a disordered form of assembly. Token suggestions, relations, magnifications, and rehearsals will only function to preserve the contrasts that adhere to a dominant culture of deafness that disassembles with the threat of armed conflict. Just as the explication from Edward Said in seeing the United States's role in the Mideast, so, too, does our prominent hand in matters at home weigh against forms of justice or coherent messaging that progress might follow.

IX.

Callie House, racial austerity, and the "fluidity of movement" in African American Action

Mary Frances Berry's *My Face Is Black Is True: Callie House and the Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparation*s recounts an early struggle for reparations and collective acceptance of individual freedoms in addition to a story of collective healing. The text recounts organized meetings, in one case,

The oldest member present was 101 years old; the youngest was thirty-nine. It was a sadly impoverished group that the federal government had declared war on: small sects like those at the Boone County [Missouri] meeting. But the power of the idea of reparations and the growing number of supporters scared government officials, even though they had the group under surveillance and knew that they were nothing more than ex-slaves and their families meeting to commiserate and work peacefully to achieve economic justice. (2005, 93-94)

House has gathered ten of thousands of dues paying members into her efforts to achieve reparations. Not only did they welcome ex-slaves, but whites as well; anyone who believed in their cause. The meetings were not only occasions for collective political action, but shared experiences and of communal growth as these meeting gave former slaves and opportunity to recount and exhume their personal endurance as "the telling and retelling of their slavery, hard work, poverty, and the condition of their relatives, neighbors, and friends, association members reinforced the commitment that kept the organization together and growing" (Berry 2005, 95). Through sharing of the personal, the political became manifest as an realized entity and prescribed doctrine.

The projection of witnessing from the Black community onto white enslavement and cordial, commensurate complicity is not subtle in social action as it is a projection of personal liberty. An outward parsing distinction into the social fabric of white, rigid institutions. The reflection of inner life is a collection of recoil into a larger communal activity. This is true of the African American community as well as white stagnant solidity. We all contribute to social growth or social stagnation through our inner lives. Our souls parse the intended development and regroup or restate what direction we find ourselves cornered into as opposed to ideal (re)constructions toward healthy and intellectual placement.

It is not unlike a dance. One group may move along the rhythms of a multi-parlayed direction while another group may move in place, too restricted to feel the scene. Consider this excerpt from Tera Hunter's *To Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War,*

African-American dance emphasized the movement of body parts, often asymmetrically and independent of one another, whereas Euro-American dance demanded rigidity to migrate its amorous implications. Black dance generally exploded outward from the hips; it was performed from a crouching position with the knees flexed and the body bent at the waist, which allowed a fluidity of movement in a propulsive rhythmic fashion. This reinforced the sense of the dancer's glee. (1997, 175)

The ontological action of dance is a personal recollection of the freedom of movement and the aspiration to be released from the broadly enforced stillness of white disenfranchisement; oppression of stillness and rigidity being a reflection and manifestation of white enforced oppression. However, African American dance with its "fluidity of movement" is a declaration of independence and the joy of liberation.

Callie House's productivity and industriousness reflected not only a "fluidity of movement," but also an elasticity of action. It may not be especially commonly known that elasticity is a scientific term with large metaphorical overtones. It refers to brain growth and redevelopment after a cause of damage. It has been shown that after trauma the brain has the elasticity, the ability, to reconnect its mental highway of activity and learn again both basic and complex skills. On a wider note elasticity is not just cognitive but a realized reflective symbol of achievement under duress. After devastation comes growth and this is a natural attainment and fostering of personal, independent reality.

The reality of our communal sphere is a reflection of the inner lives of our citizens; both individually and as a network. As Berry recounts, "Mrs. House collected funds personally at local meetings and carefully stretched whatever she received to pay her fare to the next place. She met with agents and supervised their work. She stayed with local chapter members and had them send correspondence to her family. The group also had to hold more frequent meetings to share information, instead of distributing flyers and other material because of government harassment" (2005, 167). The clear, fervent "fluidity of movement" demonstrated by Callie House is not only a testament to her personal character but a larger motions of the community, reflected in her, and a bout of interpersonal, intra-communal distillation of elasticity of self-determination under the flagrant racial austerity towards collective and individual Action.

What are reflections, but ontological stirs of motivational witnessing? What is the course of independent disclosure of character, but a dance of the kind of wealth that is not monetary. As we seek our way forward into the future we can recall the liberty of strength of the individual, not as a personal action, but as a projection of witnessed movement towards collective good. The good of innate rejection of oppression and a solidarity among the whole is a goal we continuously find ourselves in want of. For just a moment, we can hear the memory of the pulsation of movement; the dance that recollects freedom and does not digress in the face of forced redirection.

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